Child Welfare Certification
Policy, Standards, and Requirements

Latest Version - April 2025

Contents

Introduction and Program Overview

The FCB is pleased to offer its Child Welfare Certification Program. Child welfare credentials issued by the Florida Certification Board satisfy the professional certification requirements established in s. 402. 40, Florida Statutes.

To meet the needs of child welfare employers and potential employees/certification applicants, the FCB worked with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF or the Department) to develop and administer a two-phase credentialing program that allows for on-the-job competency development.

The child welfare certification program is staged to allow employees the time to complete training and build skills, competence, and confidence in the job. Stage 1 is a provisional certification. Stage 2 is full certification.

Provisional certification is issued after completing training and testing requirements. The FCB issues discipline specific provisional credentials: CWPI-P, CWCM-P, and CWLC-P. Any case/caseload may not be assigned before the provisional credential is issued.

The provisional credential is valid for 12 months, during which time field-based competency requirements and application to upgrade are completed. In rare cases a provisional extension will be granted for cause; otherwise, expired provisional credentials are not eligible to reactivate.

<u>Provisionally certified staff must work under and seek intensive supervision</u>.

A provisionally certified child welfare professional may perform all tasks required by the position held while completing his or her certification process (65C-33.005, F.A.C.). A provisionally certified employee may not mentor or evaluate any other trainee/provisionally certified person for certification purposes.

Full certification (CWPI, CWCM, CWLC) is issued after completing on-the-job work experience, supervision, field-observation requirements, and successful application for an upgrade to full certification.

Requirements for provisional certification vary, depending on the prior experience of the applicant. Available application routes are:

- New Employee – Little to no prior experience: Traditional Pre-service Program
- New Employee -- Little to no prior experience: Florida Academy Pre-service Program
- Experienced Employee – Significant prior experience in Florida or other state
- BSW/MSW Intern – Current BSW or MSW student interning in a child welfare agency

Requirements to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC credentials are the same for all provisionally certified staff.

Certified professionals complete 20 continuing education units every 12 months and renew their credentials before the October 31st expiration date.

This document outlines application, examination, credential award, credential maintenance and renewal, and reactivation/reinstatement standards, requirements, application policies, and procedures.

Additional policies can be found on the FCB website.

> The FCB offers different application routes to earn child welfare certification, based on the applicant's work history.
>
> - New Employee (not experienced)
>
> - New or returning employee (experienced)
>
> - MSW/BSW Intern
>
> - Additional Discipline
>
> The FCB's child welfare credentials satisfy certification requirements established in s. 402.40, F.S.
>
> There is not an administrative rule requiring supervisors to hold the CCWS. CCWS program policy is not included in this document.

Part 1: General Policies

1.1 Governing Documents.

Unless otherwise specified herein, all applicants and certified professionals are subject to s. 402.40, F.S., Chapter 65C-33, F.A.C., FCB policies and procedures (Policy & Procedure - Florida Certification Board) and the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (Ethical Complaints and Discipline - Florida Certification Board).

1.2 Child Welfare Credentials

The FCB's suite of child welfare credentials include eight (8) credentials that are open for application and eight (8) legacy credentials. Certified Child Welfare Professionals hold one or more of these 16 credentials, meeting the certification requirements set forth in s 402.40, F.S. and 65D-33, F.A.C.

Active credentials are open for application. Legacy credentials are sunset for application and are active for professional purposes.

1.3 Credentials Available

Application is open for the following child welfare credentials:

   a.   Child Welfare Protective Investigator – Provisional (CWPI-P)

   b.   Child Welfare Case Manager – Provisional (CWCM-P)

   c.   Child Welfare Licensing Counselor – Provisional (CWLC-P)

   d.   Child Welfare Protective Investigator (CWPI)

   e.   Child Welfare Case Manager (CWCM)

   f.   Child Welfare Licensing Counselor (CWLC)

   g.   Certified Child Welfare Supervisor (CCWS)

   h.   Child Welfare Trainer (CWT)[1]

1.4 Legacy Credentials

   a.   A legacy credential is one of eight (8) credentials issued by the Florida Department of Children and Families to child welfare staff who met education, training, and certification requirements of credentialing programs administered prior to 2011.

   1.   Child Welfare Protective Investigator Supervisor (CWPI-Sup)

   2.   Child Welfare Protective Investigator Specialist (CWPI-Spec)

   3.   Child Welfare Case Manager Supervisor (CWCM-Sup)

   4.   Child Welfare Case Manager Specialist, CWCM-Spec)

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[1] The FCB issues the CWT to applicants approved by Department. The FCB does not set CWT application and competency demonstration requirements; they are set by the Office of Child and Family Well-Being. After award, FCB credential maintenance and renewal requirements apply.

5. Child Welfare Licensing Counselor Supervisor (CWLC-Sup)

6. Child Welfare Licensing Counselor Specialist (CWLC-Spec)

7. Certified Child Protection Professional (CCPP)

8. Child Welfare Trainer (CWT) credentials issued by DCF prior to 2011.

b. Legacy credentials are not open for new applications; they are eligible to renew, reactivate, or reinstate.

c. Legacy credentials satisfy the certification requirements in s. 402.40, F.S. and 65C-33, F.A.C.

1.5 Applicant Eligibility and General Certification Policies

The following general certification policies are required for all applicants, regardless of the credential sought. These policies outline applicant eligibility requirements; mandatory online accounts, application for certification and credential renewal; individual obligation to ensure certification fees are paid; and applicability of global FCB policies and procedures, including the *Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures*.

1.5.1 Applicant Eligibility/Child Welfare Employment Requirements

Eligible applicants are a current employee or MSW/BSW student intern with the Department of Children and Families, a Community Based Care Lead Agency, or a Contracted Case Management Organization that meets the conditions specified in 65C-33, F.A.C.

a. Positions that require certification:
   1. Child Protective Investigator, Case Manager, and Licensing Counselor
   2. Child Protective Investigator Supervisor, Case Manager Supervisor, and Licensing Counselor Supervisor
b. Regardless of position title, eligible applicants hold a full-time position and assigned caseload in which they hold primary responsibility or supervisory responsibility to assess and assure child safety, permanency, and well-being.
c. A temporary or partial caseload may not be established for the purposes of meeting certification eligibility requirements.
d. The following employee roles are not eligible for certification, regardless of position title:
   1. Those who ONLY are secondary workers as defined in 65C-33.001(22), F.A.C. or similar position, or
   2. Any role that requires review and approval by the primary worker on a case, the primary worker's supervisor, or other certified child welfare professional.
e. Current employment in a certification-eligible position is required for applicants seeking:
   1. Provisional certification
   2. Upgrade to full certification
   3. Provisional extension
   4. Additional discipline certification
   5. Reactivation or reinstatement of an expired legacy credential

1.5.2 Criminal History Requirements

a. All child welfare employees must pass a Level 2 Background Check as a condition of employment and of certification. In lieu of conducting additional background checks, the FCB requires employers' attestations that their employee/certification applicant has met statutory background screening requirements and has an 'eligible' status in the state's Background Clearinghouse.
b. If eligibility status is revoked by the state, the FCB will automatically suspend active credentials.
c. The FCB will conduct random audits to ensure compliance with this policy.

1.5.3   Credentialing History Requirements

a. Eligible applicants have a clear professional credentialing history, with no published disciplinary actions.
b. Ineligible applicants have active discipline on any professional credential(s) issued by the FCB or any other state or national certification and licensing authority.
c. Revocation applies to all active credentials and makes the individual ineligible to apply for any other credential administered by the FCB during the revocation period. See the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures for more information.

1.5.4   FCB Online Account.

An FCB online account is required.

a. The individual applicant must create their own account; this action may not be assigned to anyone else.
b. Applicant accounts contain personal contact information, current employer information, acknowledgement of professional and criminal history, and agreement to follow the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures.
c. The applicant/certified professional is responsible for ensuring that the FCB has their current, primary personal contact information in their account. The applicant's failure to maintain current contact information is not a valid justification for his or her non-compliance with credential or certification requirements.

1.5.5   Online Application.

The FCB online certification system and database generate and administer all certification activities. All individuals must use the online system (unless approved ADA accommodations exist). The individual applicant must create their own application; this activity may not be completed by anyone other than the applicant because the application itself contains personal attestations. The following applications are required at various times, as appropriate:

a. Provisional Certification Application. Applicants access online applications through their account; the e-application and supporting documentation must be approved a minimum of ten (10) business days before the requested test date.
b. Upgrade to Full Certification Application. Applicants access the upgrade application through their account; the online application and supporting documentation must be approved a minimum of ten (10) business days before the provisional credential's expiration date.
c. Credential Renewal Application. Applicants access the renewal application – for EACH credential that will be renewed – through their account; the online renewal application, linkage to the current employer and/or payor code, and fees must be processed before the credential's expiration date.

1.5.6   Formal Education

a. A bachelor's degree is required for certification. The FCB accepts applicants without a degree who are hired under the Departments Enhanced Workforce program.
b. The State of Florida recognizes eligible high school diplomas
c. Eligible college/university degrees are issued by an institution holding federally recognized accreditation at the time of degree award. See FCB global policy regarding Formal Education for details.
d. All foreign degrees must be translated, and an equivalency evaluation must be completed. See FCB global policy regarding Foreign Degrees for details.

1.5.7 Certification Fees

a. ALL certification fees are the responsibility of the applicant. If the employer is paying fees on behalf of the applicant, applicants are responsible for ensuring fees are paid.
b. Applicants must:
  1. Maintain current, personal email and US mailing addresses for FCB correspondence.
  2. Link each individual application for which fees are paid by the employer to the correct employer code (provided by the employer to the employee).
  3. Monitor accounts to ensure fees are paid and credentials are issued accurately and timely.

1.5.8 Global FCB Policies

In addition to the requirements, policies, and procedures herein, all certification applicants and certified professionals are subject to relevant global FCB policies and procedures, including the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. These are posted online at Policy & Procedure - Florida Certification Board and Ethical Complaints & Discipline - Florida Certification Board

Part 2: Application, Award, Maintenance, and Renewal

Child welfare certification application follows a structured series of activities, designed to support new hires to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to competently assess and assure child safety, permanency, and well-being. The application process is implemented and managed in partnership with the FCB and statewide child welfare training professionals and related stakeholders.

Competency Based Work-Place Learning Programs[2] demonstrate the effectiveness of a structured combination of organized training and on-the-job supervised practice to build competency and confidence. The child welfare certification program structure supports this approach by assessing classroom and field training and awarding provisional certification to those who meet standards. Statute requires the Department to administer a competency-based training program that aligns with the core competencies. There are two training curricula available to certification applicants: the traditional pre-service model and the new Florida Academy model. The certification program is equally valid for both curricula options because the credential requirements measure core competencies, which are the same across curriculum; it is the instructional methods and strategies that differ.

Application options vary based on the applicant's experience level and the training curriculum completed. The requirements for each option are provided. Please note:

➢ The following information references mandatory forms. These forms document the achievement of each requirement; the specific directions and standards for these requirements are provided with the form itself.
➢ Application documents created in the field are provided to a Point of Contact, the Point of Contact provides completed forms to FCB for processing. The role of the Point of Contact is not addressed in this section; please see the Point of Contact Checklist attachment.

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[2] E3416 Standard Practice for Competency-based Workplace Learning Programs

2.1 Provisional Certification – Traditional Pre-Service Model

The Traditional Pre-service Model is for new applicants and experienced applicants.

2.1.1 Pre-service Training – Traditional Path

a. New applicants complete the traditional pre-service CORE and discipline-specific track curricula.
b. Experienced applicants may take the exam before registering for training. Those who pass the test do not complete pre-service training; those who fail the exam are not eligible to retest and must complete the traditional pre-service CORE and discipline-specific track curricula.
c. BSW/MSW intern applicants complete their College of Social Work's Child Welfare Certificate Program coursework and additional training identified by the internship provider.

2.1.2 Certification Exam and Retesting

a. Take the CWPI or the CWCM exam.
   1. CWPI-P applicants take the CWPI exam.
   2. CWCM-P and CWLC-P applicants take the CWCM exam.
b. Applicants who pass the exam are awarded provisional certification.
c. Experienced employee applicants who do not pass the exam are not eligible to retest.
d. Applicants who do not pass the exam are eligible to retest; continued employment in a certification eligible position is required.
e. The FCB does not limit the number of test attempts; the test taker's employer may set a limit before acting.

2.1.3 Provisional Certification Award – Traditional Model

a. The provisional credential is awarded after passing the exam and approval of all requirements and supporting documentation. The issue date is the date the certification application is processed and approved in the FCB's online certification system; the expiration date is 12 months later.
a. The provisional period and requirements for upgrade are the same for Traditional and Florida Academy graduates. Please see the Provisional Period and Full Certification – CWPI, CWCM, CWLC UPGRADE Requirements sections for details.

2.2   Provisional Certification – Florida Academy Model

The Florida Academy Model is for new applicants.

2.2.1   Pre-service Training Part 1 – Florida Academy Path

a. Complete the FCB *Concepts and Procedures Checklist*. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.
b. Complete the Florida Academy Foundations curriculum.

2.2.2   Foundations Exam and Retesting

a. Take the Child Welfare Foundations exam.
b. Applicants who pass the exam are promoted to discipline specific training.
c. Applicants who do not pass the exam are eligible to retest; continued employment in a certification eligible position is required.
d. The FCB does not limit the number of test attempts; the test taker's employer may set a limit before acting.

2.2.3   Pre-service Training Part 2 – Florida Academy Path

Complete the Florida Academy PI, CM, or LC discipline curriculum.

2.2.4   Competency Demonstration Assessments

a. Complete two separate, independent FCB *Competency Demonstration Assessment Instruments.* The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.
b. The immediate supervisor or designee completes one full instrument; one or more qualified evaluators completes the second instrument.
c. Each person conducting an assessment must complete their own, separate instrument, documenting ONLY the competencies assessed.

2.2.5   Provisional Certification Award – Florida Academy Model

b. The provisional credential is awarded when the FCB approves all requirements and supporting documentation. The issue date is the date the certification application is processed and approved in the FCB's online certification system; the expiration date is 12 months later.
c. The provisional period and requirements for upgrade are the same for Traditional and Florida Academy graduates. Please see *The Provisional Period* and the *CWPI, CWCM, CWLC UPGRADE Requirements* sections for details.

2.3   The Provisional Period

The provisional period is specifically designed to support on-the-job learning and competency development.

a. All provisionally certified staff are required to seek out and work under intensive supervision as they complete discipline specific on-the-job training, experience, supervision, and assessment requirements.
b. Supervisors have the responsibility to support provisionally certified staff to develop the competency necessary to carry a caseload under standard supervision.
c. On-the-job training, experience, supervision, and assessment requirements, along with the application to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC credential, must be complete before the provisional credential expires.
d. If necessary, **employers** may request an extension of a provisional certification on behalf of the employee. Extensions are only granted for valid reasons. For more information, refer to the Provisional Certification Extension policy.

2.3.1   Provisional Certification Extension Policy

a. The FCB cannot extend an expired provisional certification credential. Provisional extension requests are due a minimum of 15 days prior to expiration.
b. Provisional certification extensions may be requested by the employer, on behalf of their employee, for any of the following reasons:
   1. Extended absence from work for maternity/parental leave, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), military or reserve service, or other extended leave. The extension will be equal to the amount of time the employee was on approved leave.
   2. Part-time staff. The extension is for a maximum of six (6) months.
   3. Discipline transfers mid-certification. The extension is for six (6) months.
   4. Other circumstances. The applicant must submit a written Extension Request Memo packet for review and action by the FCB. The length of the extension will vary based on circumstances, not to exceed 6 months.
c. The application is not online; contact the FCB for application directions and form. Note: the application must include official supporting documents that verify the circumstances surrounding the need for a provisional certification extension.
a. Denied extension requests mean the provisional credential is no longer valid. Certification requires a new provisional application and fee plus all work experience, on-the-job supervision, and competency verification.
b. Approved extension requests result in a new expiration date equal to the length of time approved for the extension. All upgrade requirements are due 30 calendar days before the new provisional credential expiration date.

2.4   CWPI, CWCM, CWLC UPGRADE Requirements

Upgrade requirements are the same for all provisionally certified child welfare professionals, regardless of the provisional certification application route. Eligible applicants meet the following requirements before their provisional credential expires:

a. Maintain a certification eligible position
b. Hold a valid provisional credential
c. Complete work experience requirements
d. Complete supervision requirements
e. Complete field observation requirements
f. Submit the application to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC

2.4.1   On-the-Job Experience Requirement

a. Complete 1,040 hours/6 months of consecutive, full-time discipline-specific work. Eligible experience occurs post-provisional award in a position where the applicant has primary case responsibility or directly supervises individuals with primary case responsibility.
b. Work experience earned prior to the award of the provisional credential is not eligible for Upgrade application purposes.
c. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.

2.4.2   Supervision Requirement

a. Complete 40 hours of supervision focused on building child welfare practice knowledge, skills, and competency.
b. Administrative supervision focused on topics such as annual performance reviews, assessing an employee's punctuality, adherence to policies, and overall job efficiency, and similar activities are not eligible.
c. 20 hours must occur by individual, one-on-one supervision; the other 20 hours may include individual and group. Eligible supervision occurs at a minimum of 15-minute increments.
   1. Qualified supervisors are the applicant's immediate supervisor, designee, or other agency supervisor, trainer, mentor, quality assurance staff or other agency management/leadership staff assigned by the employer to provide supervision to employees seeking certification. Supervision provided by a relative, any person sharing the same household, or any person in a romantic, domestic, or familial relationship with the applicant is not acceptable toward fulfillment of certification requirements.
   2. Individual supervision is one-on-one contact between a qualified supervisor and a provisionally certified individual, during which the individual apprises the supervisor of the status of a case and discusses it with the supervisor. The supervisor must provide the individual with oversight and guidance in working on the case, and evaluate the individual's performance, pursuant to 65C-33.001(14), F.A.C.
   3. Group supervision is supervision provided to two (2) or more individuals at the same time. General training, in-service, or other educational events are not eligible to meet group supervision requirements, however, these and similar group events that focus on building skills using work products are eligible.
   4. Supervisory hours are reported on the FCB *Supervision and Competency Verification* form. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.

2.4.3   Field Observation/Competency Demonstration

a. Complete six (6) field observations and follow-up case consultation with a qualified supervisor to ensure demonstration of competency in the field and alignment of field work, documentation and decision making.
b. A maximum of two (2) of the six (6) visits/observations may take place in professional-, office-, or agency-based settings; the remaining visits/observations must take place in the field and involve interactions with children, families, caregivers, or similar case participants.

c. At a minimum, each visit/observation and follow-up consultation should last one-and-a-half (1.5) to two (2) hours.

d. Field observations and competency verification are also reported on the FCB *Supervision and Competency Verification* form. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.

2.5 Additional Discipline Certification – Traditional Pre-Service Model

Applicants must hold an active CWPI, CWCM, CWLC, or any legacy credential and meet specific training, supervision, and observation requirements. There is not a testing requirement.

2.5.1 Discipline Specific Training

Complete the Protective Investigations (PI) specialty track, the Case Manager (CM) specialty track, or the Licensing Counselor (LC) specialty track curriculum.

2.5.2 On-the-Job Experience Requirement

a. Complete 520 hours/3 months of consecutive, full-time discipline-specific work where the applicant has primary case responsibility or directly supervised individuals with primary case responsibility.
b. Work experience earned prior to the application for certification through the additional discipline route is not eligible for Upgrade application purposes.
c. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.

2.5.3 Supervision Requirement

a. Complete 20 hours of supervision focused on building child welfare practice knowledge, skills, and competency.
b. Administrative supervision focused on topics such as annual performance reviews, assessing an employee's punctuality, adherence to policies, and overall job efficiency, and similar activities are not eligible.
c. 10 hours must occur by individual, one-on-one supervision; the other 10 hours may include individual and group. Eligible supervision occurs at a minimum of 15-minute increments.
   1. Qualified supervisors are the applicant's immediate supervisor, designee, or other agency supervisor, trainer, mentor, quality assurance staff or other agency management/leadership staff assigned by the employer to provide supervision to employees seeking certification. Supervision provided by a relative, any person sharing the same household, or any person in a romantic, domestic, or familial relationship with the applicant is not acceptable toward fulfillment of certification requirements.
   2. Individual supervision is one-on-one contact between a qualified supervisor and a provisionally certified individual, during which the individual apprises the supervisor of the status of a case and discusses it with the supervisor. The supervisor must provide the individual with oversight and guidance in working on the case, and evaluate the individual's performance, pursuant to 65C-33.001(14), F.A.C.
   3. Group supervision is supervision provided to two (2) or more individuals at the same time. General training, in-service, or other educational events are not eligible to meet group supervision requirements, however, these and similar group events that focus on building skills using work products are eligible.
d. Supervisory hours are reported on the FCB *Supervision and Competency Verification* form. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.

2.5.4 Field Observation/Competency Demonstration

a. Complete three (3) field observations and follow-up case consultation with a qualified supervisor to ensure demonstration of competency in the field and alignment of field work, documentation and decision making.
b. Only one (1) of the three (3) visits/observations may take place in professional-, office-, or agency-based settings; the remaining visits/observations must take place in the field and involve interactions with children, families, caregivers, or similar case participants.
c. At a minimum, each visit/observation and follow-up consultation should last one-and-a-half (1.5) to two (2) hours.
d. Field observations and competency verification are also reported on the FCB *Supervision and Competency Verification* form. The form and detailed directions are included in the Attachments section of this document.

2.5.5   Certification Award – Additional Discipline

a. The additional discipline credential is awarded after approval of all requirements and supporting documentation.
b. The first expiration date is the same date as the existing credential. At renewal time, the individual will renew each credential they want to continue to hold. After the first expiration, the new credential will expire on October 31, every two years.

Part 3: Credential Award, Maintenance, and Renewal

Credential award, maintenance, and renewal policies apply to all certified professionals.

3.1 Full Certification Award

a. Credentials are issued throughout the year; child welfare credentials expire and must be renewed every two years. The expiration date is always October 31st – the renewal year varies.
b. After the first renewal, the credential will expire on October 31st, every other year.
c. The FCB issues a wall certificate when a full credential is earned. A wall certificate is not issued for a provisional certification. The wall certificate is suitable for framing and is an indicator of achievement. It includes an award date but does not expire. The wall certificate may not be used to verify current certification.
d. Certified professionals (provisionally certified and fully certified) can print a PDF wallet card from their FCB online account. The wallet card will only print if the credential is current and in good standing.

3.2 Credential Verification

a. The FCB's public Verify a Credential search result is the primary source for verifying an individual's certification status, providing current information, collected directly from the database. This feature is available to the public by selecting Verify a Credential option at the top of the FCB's homepage.
b. People are listed in the database under their official government-recognized name. It is important to search using multiple versions of a person's name if they are not easily found through the database search feature.
c. The database only returns results for individuals who have been awarded a credential; there is no search result for an applicant or application status.
d. Applicants can access their FCB online account and online application at any time to demonstrate that their certification process is underway.
e. FCB's results include the credentials status, as well as any suspension or revocation history. The definitions of common credentials status follow.
    1. Certified. The credential is active and in good standing. There are no active ethics investigations or disciplinary sanctions.
    2. Certified – Open Ethics Investigation. The credential is active and the FCB is currently investigating an accepted allegation of ethical or professional misconduct. This status is eligible to carry a caseload.
    3. Inactive. The credential was not renewed; the expiration date is between three to 48 months old. An inactive credential is eligible for reactivation (3-36 months expired) or reinstatement (36-48 months expired).
    4. Expired. The credential has been inactive for more than 48 months. The credential is not eligible for reactivation or reinstatement. A new application is required.
    5. Suspended. The credential is not eligible for work related purposes for a specific period in response to a found allegation of ethical or professional misconduct. Once the suspension is lifted, it remains on record and shows as credentialing history on FCB's public Verify and Credential search engine.
    6. Revoked. The credential has been revoked for violation of one or more of the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct. Revocations apply to all credentials and prohibit application for any new credential until at least three years have passed. A revoked status is never removed from the person's credentialing history.

3.3 Credential Maintenance

The credential belongs to the certified professional. It is the sole responsibility of the certified professional to:

a. Ensure the FCB has current, primary mailing and email contact information for correspondence purposes.

b. Work within the scope of their credential.
c. Seek out and participate in supervision and continuing education to build further competency.
d. Participate in continuing education.
e. Maintain ethical and professional conduct standards.
f. Renew credentials before expiration, to include ensuring creating a renewal application, linking each eligible renewal application to the correct employer code; ensure fee payment is processed, and the credential is renewed in a timely manner.

3.4   Renewal

3.4.1   Expiration and Renewal Dates

a. Provisional credentials are not eligible for renewal; certification status is maintained by successfully upgrading to the full credential before the provisional credential expiration date.
b. The first time the full credential is issued through the Upgrade process, it expires for the first time according to the following schedule:
    1. CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC credentials issued in the months of November through July expire for the first time the upcoming October 31st.
    2. CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC credentials issued in August, September and October expire for the first time the following October 31st.
c. CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC credentials issued through the Additional Discipline process expire for the first time on the same expiration date of the primary credential.
d. All renewed credentials are valid for the upcoming two-year period, starting November 1 through October 31, two years later.

3.4.2   Renewal Application.

a. The renewal process occurs online.
b. The online certification system processes renewals as a new application; this means the user must 'apply' to renew their credentials. Application requires the user to select, complete, link, and submit the application for processing.
    1. Users who pay their renewal fee themselves complete payment as part of the renewal application process.
    2.   Users who have their renewal fee(s) paid by their employer are responsible for (1) linking each requested renewal account to the correct payment source, and (2) following up to ensure that payment was received and applied from the FCB.
c. Timely renewal applications are available between August 1 and October 31 of each calendar year.
d. Late period renewal applications are available in the month of November; there is a late fee per credential.
e. Inactive period begins for all credentials that were not renewed before December 1. An inactive credential cannot be used for any purpose until it is reactivated (inactive 3 to 36 months) or reinstated (inactive 36-48 months).

3.4.2   Reactivation and Reinstatement.

a. Reactivation is for a credential in inactive status from 3 to 36 months (3 calendar years).
b. Reinstatement is for a credential in inactive status from 36 to 48 months (2 calendar years)
c. Reactivation and reinstatement requirements vary by credential and award path. Please contact the FCB for assistance.
d. A credential that has been inactive for more than 48 months has expired and cannot be reactivated or reinstated. A new application for certification is required, including all fees, standards, and testing requirements.

3.5   Continuing Education.

3.5.1   Required Hours of Continuing Education Hours

a. Continuing education (CE) is required for all fully certified professionals; CEs do not apply to provisional certification.
b. The first time a credential renews, CEs are prorated according to the number of months the credential was held prior to its first expiration date.

# Months Fully Certified	# CEs Due
Less than 12 months	0
12 – 23 months	20
24 – 48 months	40

c. After the first renewal, complete 20 CEs for each 12-month period, starting on November 1 and ending two years later, on October 31, for a total of 40 CEs before expiration date.

3.5.2   CE Eligibility and Documentation

a. The FCB does not mandate specific CE content other than the requirement that the CE is related to the provision of child welfare services and reflects core competency topics.
b. An FCB-approved education provider must deliver CEs.
c. Eligible documentation includes certificates of completion, learning management system reports, transcripts, and other formats that include the participants name, the providers name, the course name, the date, and hours of education provided/completed.
d. CEs documentation is not uploaded to the certification account; certified professionals maintain their own CE documentation for a minimum of three years. The FCB verifies CEs by random audit, each December, after each renewal period closes.
e. For information about valid CEs, documentation requirements, and related policy, please see https://flcertificationboard.org/education-training/fcb-online-trainings/

1.6   Certification Discipline and Revocation

3.6.1   FCB *Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (the Code)*.

a. All FCB applicants and certified professionals are subject to the policies and procedures as stated in the FCB's *Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (the Code)*.
b. The Code and associated disciplinary procedures are implemented through a partnership between required reporters, reports from members of the public, the FCB and its Child Welfare Advisory Council Ethics Committee members. Please see the *FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures* for detailed information.

3.6.2   Certification Revocation

a. The Florida Administrative Code further identifies the FCB as the party responsible for credential revocation.
b. A credential is subject to revocation for founded allegations of ethical or professional misconduct as defined in the Code.
c. Respondents are provided with a full and complete copy of the accepted complaint and provided with a time limit for response.
    1. Failure to respond to a complaint is viewed as an admission of guilt; the investigation and sanctioning will proceed as such.

     2.   Failure to receive notice of an ethical complaint due to incorrect personal mail or email address is not an acceptable reason to appeal a sanction.

d. A credential will be revoked if an applicant, provisionally certified child welfare professional, or fully certified child welfare professional is found to have:

     1.   1. Falsified any part of a client record (whether in a hard copy or digital format) contained in the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN), Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) or feeder database.

     2.   Accessed information in the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN), Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS), or any of its feeder databases for a non-work-related purpose.

e. Revocations apply to all credentials and prohibit application for any new credential until at least three years have passed.

f. Revoked credentials are not eligible for reactivation or reinstatement. After a three-year period, starting on the date the FCB implements sanctions recommended by the Ethics Committee, the individual may petition the Board of Directors for approval to re-apply for certification, according to the policies and procedures detailed in the Code.

Part 4: Examination

4.1   Child Welfare Professional Exams

a. The FCB offers three (3) child welfare certification exams,
    1. Protective Investigator (CWPI)
    2. Child Welfare Case Manager (CWCM)
    3. Child Welfare Foundations (CWF)
b. All child welfare exams are computer-based, online exams administered at testing sites throughout Florida.
c. Child welfare exams are two-hour, multiple-choice exams that contain between 75 to 100 questions.
    1. Each question lists three or four possible answers, only one of which is the correct or best answer.
    2. The exam time does not include the time allotted for the pre-testing software tutorial and any post-exam surveys.

4.2   Overview of the Testing Process

a. All child welfare credentials require a passing score on a multiple-choice exam of core competency.
b. Child welfare exams are administered online, at approved employer-based testing sites across Florida. There are NO paper and pencil exam administrations available.
c. Each test site sets up its own calendar of the days and times that they are open and available to administer the exam.
d. Each exam begins with a brief tutorial. Extra time is allotted to complete the tutorial.
e. Test takers receive unofficial test scores immediately; official scores are issued to the Point of Contact within 24 hours and are processed by FCB within 24 to 48 hours of completing the test.

f. Test takers who do not pass the exam will receive a score report from their Certification Specialist indicating strengths and weaknesses by performance domain to help guide study efforts. We only send official scores to the points of contact.

g.   A person can retest as many times as the agency allows. They must wait 3 days or 72 hours before for a retake.
h.   The exam fee must be paid for of $100 or we may bill to the DCF contract

4.2.1   Exam Development

a. The development of a credentialing program designed to measure an individual's competence in a particular area is a long and complex process. A formal, psychometrically sound Role Delineation Study (RDS) is the first step of the credential development process and is the most applied and accepted validation strategy used in designing credentialing programs. The purpose of the RDS is to formally identify the domains of knowledge and specific tasks needed to be a competent professional in the specified field. At the end of the RDS, an examination blueprint is established, which identifies the number of questions per performance domain and job task necessary to measure an applicant's content knowledge base.
b. Exam items are written by and validated by subject matter experts, ensuring that each item on the exam meets the following standards.
    1. The question is correct.
    2. The correct answer is the best answer agreed upon by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).
    3. The incorrect answers are plausible, but wrong answers.
    4. The question measures the core competency it is intended to measure.
    5. The information is important for a certified professional to know.
    6. The question belongs on the exam.

c. Two widely accepted standards for the development of credentialing programs and certifying agencies are the Standards for Accreditation of Certifying Agencies (National Commission for Certifying Agencies, 2002) and the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education, 1999). The FCB uses the above standards to guide all aspects of the exam development process which establishes content validity for all certification programs, including exam instruments.

4.2.2 Exam Confidentiality

a. All exam content, specifically questions, answers, and diagrams where applicable, are the exclusive and confidential property of FCB and are protected by FCB's intellectual property rights. They may not be copied, reproduced, modified, published, uploaded, posted, transmitted, or distributed in any way without the express authorization of FCB.
b. Candidates who sit for FCB exams must agree they have read and will abide by the terms and conditions of the FCB Exam Confidentiality Policy by completing an *Exam Confidentiality Agreement* before being allowed to register for any FCB exam. Acknowledgement of and compliance with the FCB Exam Confidentiality Policy is a condition of certification. An individual will not be allowed to register for any FCB exam without a current FCB Exam Confidentiality Agreement on file.
c. Additional information is posted online https://flcertificationboard.org/policy-procedure/

4.2.3 Special Accommodations

a. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the FCB will provide reasonable and appropriate special testing accommodations for individuals with physical or learning disabilities to the extent permitted by cost, examination administration constraints, examination security considerations and availability of resources. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide adequate documentation of his or her disability from an approved medical provider.
b. The Special Accommodations Policy and related documents are posted online https://flcertificationboard.org/policy-procedure/
c. All requests for special testing accommodations must be received by the FCB for approval a minimum of 30 business days before the requested test date.
d. Approved testing accommodation is valid while the applicant has an open, active Application for Certification. Applicants who have previously received approval for special testing accommodations who are seeking another credential MUST submit an updated application.
e. Unapproved testing accommodations will not be honored at the testing site.

4.2.4 Passing Score

a. A group of subject matter experts (SMEs) established the passing score for each of the FCB exams using industry best practices, as directed by a psychometrician. The SMEs evaluated individual test questions and estimated the percentage of qualified professionals that would be able to answer each question correctly. These estimates were analyzed for consistency and calculated to produce a passing score.
b. The passing score for the CWPI and CWCM exams is 78%.
c. The passing score for the Child Welfare Foundations (CWF) is in pilot; 50% is required to pass the pilot version of the CWF exam.

4.3   Test Center Locations, Registration, and Testing Rules

FCB's testing protocols for child welfare exams are customized to meet Florida Administrative Code, which requires that each "training entity is responsible for proctoring the post-test, and for ensuring that there is technical support available, in the event of an emergency related to the administration of the test." (65C-33.004 (1), F.A.C.)

4.3.1   Test sites and Proctors

a. Child welfare exams are administered at employer-based sites across Florida.
    1. The employer establishes test and retest dates with the FCB.
    2. All test registration activities for initial tests must be complete at least 10 days before the requested test date; for retests, the wait period to retest is three (3) days.
b. Only trained and approved proctors may administer an FCB child welfare certification exam.
c. Employers and/or training entities identify proctors, who then complete the FCB online proctor training.
    1. The acceptable proctor to test taker ratio is 1:20, IF the proctor has not delivered any curriculum to any of the test takers.
    2. If the proctor has delivered any pre-service training to any of the test takers, there must be two proctors, regardless of the number of test takers.
d. All proctors complete and submit the *Exam Proctor Administration Report* form within 24 hours of the exam administration. Each individual proctor must complete a separate Report.

4.3.2   Exam Registration

a. Points of Contact coordinate exam registration activities on behalf of applicants. The training team notifies test takers of the date, time, and location of the test administration.
b. All exam reschedules, cancellations, missed exams, or emergency withdrawals are communicated to the FCB by the Point of Contact. Rescheduling details are requested by the POC and coordinated with the FCB. The POC communicates this information to the test taker.

4.3.3   Exam Administration

a. To ensure security throughout the testing experience, test takers are always monitored.
b. Proctors log test takers into the testing computer.
c. Test takers must listen carefully to any directions given by the proctor and read the online examination directions carefully; verify the correct exam is provided.
d. Test takers with problems, distractions, questions, or concerns, must raise their hand for assistance from the test site proctor. The proctor cannot answer questions related to the exam content.
e. After completing the exam, test takers raise their hand to signal the proctor to come to the workstation and ensure that the exam has ended and uploaded for scoring properly. Typically, the unofficial score will be displayed on the computer screen after the exam. Exam results are encrypted and transmitted to the FCB for processing. The test center does not retain any information other than when and where your exam was taken.

4.3.4   Test Site Rules

No personal items are allowed in the testing room, including but not limited to the following:

a. Mobile phones

b. Hand-held computers/personal digital assistants (PDAs) or other electronic devices

c. Pagers

d. Watches

e. Wallets

f. Purses

g. Firearms or other weapons

h. Hats (and other non-religious head coverings)

i. Bags

j. Coats

k. Books and/or notes, pens, or pencils (including scratch paper)

l. Food or drinks

m. Studying is NOT allowed in the testing site.

n. Visitors, children, spouses, family, or friends ARE NOT allowed in the testing site.

4.3.5 Misconduct and Dismissal Policy

Failure to follow testing site instructions and rules of conduct, violations of security, or disruption of the exam administration may result in dismissal from the examination, voided examination scores, and forfeiture of examination fees.

4.4 After the Exam

4.4.1 Exam Score Reporting

a. Test takers receive unofficial test scores immediately; official scores are provided to the Point of Contact within 24 hours. Test scores are processed by FCB within 24 to 48 hours of completing the test.
b. Test takers who do not pass the exam will receive a score report indicating strengths and weaknesses by performance domain to help guide study efforts.
c. Test scores are valid for a three-year period. Individuals who allow their credential(s) to become inactive and have a test score older than three-years will be required to retest as part of the reactivation ~~reinstatement~~ or reinstatement process.

4.4.2 Exam Retakes

a. There is a 3-day wait period for retesting. Retests are scheduled by the test takers POC.
b. The mandatory waiting period cannot be waived under any circumstance.

4.4.3 Examination Grievances

If a test taker believes an unusual event or condition related to the administration of the examination caused a significant adverse effect on their performance during the exam, they may submit a written grievance regarding the exam administration to the FCB for investigation.

a. Grievances must be submitted to the FCB within 30 calendar days of the examination. Grievance statements must be submitted in writing, dated, and signed.
b. Information to include in the grievance statement should include, but is not limited to:
    1. Title of exam
    2. Examination date
    3. Name and location of testing site

4. Name of proctor on duty (if known)
5. Detailed explanation of the situation
6. Impact the situation had on exam performance

 c. FCB will investigate the specifics of the testing situation. When warranted, the test taker will be offered a free retake. An exam grievance will not challenge the design or content of the examination or overturn a failing score.

4.4.4   Test Disclosure

FCB exam security and item banking procedures do not permit anyone to access exam questions, answer keys, or other secure materials related to the examination.

4.4.5   Challenging an exam item

If the test taker believes that a question and/or answer on a FCB Certification exam is inaccurate or incorrect, they may request an evaluation of the question via the FCB exam item challenge process. This process is necessary to identify areas of weakness or flaws in the questions, but the exam itself cannot be re-scored; therefore, most challenges do not result in a change in the exam score.

 a. Criteria for accepting an exam item challenge
  1. The challenge is from the test taker
  2. The exam was taken within the last 15 calendar days (not business days).
  3. A specific item(s) on the exam is being challenged.
  4. A detailed and clear description of the item or question, or answer being challenged is provided.
 b. Criteria for not accepting an exam item challenge
  1. Challenges to the entire exam.
  2. Challenges to the passing score.
  3. Challenges based on study materials (practice tests, study guides, training materials, etc.) or any special accommodations.
  4. Challenges to the appropriateness of a question.
  5. Challenges to an item due to candidates' insufficient knowledge (e.g., you cannot challenge an item if you do not know the answer, you are not sure, or you cannot understand)
  6. Submission is more than 15 calendar days (not business days) after the exam was taken.
  7. Challenges based on technical issues experienced at a testing site.
  8. Challenges that are not submitted via the FCB Exam Item Challenge process.

4.4.6   Steps for challenging Exam items:

 a. Review FCB criteria for accepting and not accepting an exam item challenge.
 b. Request the FCB Exam Item Challenge Form by sending an email to hkim@flcertificationboard.org.
 c. Complete the FCB exam item challenge form and email the completed form to hkim@flcertificationboard.org, including the words "Exam Item Challenge" in the subject.
 d. The FCB testing team will review your submission for completeness. If incomplete, you will be asked to provide more information. If complete, the FCB testing team will review your challenge.
 e. A review takes approximately 15 business days.
 f. Once the review is complete, you will be notified of the outcome. This response will include either the result of the evaluation or, if more time is needed for evaluation, an estimate of when you can expect a decision. Once a decision has been made, it will be regarded as final, and no further evaluation will occur.

4.4.7   Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. Will I find out whether my answer to a specific item was correct, or whether I would have passed if I had gotten the item correct?

A. Exam development staff members will review your exam challenge as described above. To protect exam security, we will not provide information about whether your answer was correct, nor will we provide information about how your performance on that item may have affected your final score.

Q. What if I do not agree with the evaluator's decision? May I appeal it?

A. The evaluator's decision in the item challenge process is final and no further evaluation will occur.

Q. Will I be given the rationale for the decision?

A. To protect exam security, the rationale for the decision will be kept confidential and will not be provided.

5.1 Child Welfare Advisory Council

a. The Child Welfare Advisory Council (CWAC) is a volunteer body that provides recommendations and input on child welfare certification issues.
b. The CWAC includes representatives from each Department region and its central office, each Community-Based Care lead agencies, and other stakeholders approved by the CWAC.
c. Please see the FCB Child Welfare Advisory Council Bylaws for additional information.

5.2 Point of Contact

a. The Point of Contact (POC) refers to both the system and the people assigned to meet the requirement that each "employing agency shall ensure that all certification requirements are met within specified time frames for those positions requiring certification[3]."
b. The system dictates how applicants, employers, and the FCB coordinate efforts to support child welfare professionals earn certification in a timely and efficient manner.
   1. Each employer identifies and supervises people who serve as the single Point of Contact (POC). The primary role of the POC is to serve as the conduit between the FCB and applicants/employers.
   2. Certification application, examination, and award activities are coordinated through the POC; the FCB does not communicate directly with applicants. Once certified, the FCB does respond directly to credential maintenance, renewal or other technical assistance needs.
c. FCB assigns Certification Specialists to specific DCF regions; these staff work with all POCs, representing all child welfare employers in the region.
d. Points of Contact or any other person may not create an online profile or online application on behalf of an applicant. Failure to comply will result in an ethical complaint for falsifying application documents, as these actions require personal attestations.
e. Points of Contact do facilitate and coordinate all remaining provisional certification and Upgrade to Full Certification application, testing, and documentation activities. Specifically, the POC is responsible for submitting all required forms on behalf of applicants, communicating with the FCB, and resolving pending issues with applicants. Core responsibilities of POCs are to ensure:
   1. Applicants complete online accounts with primary personal email and US mailing addresses.
   2. Applicants link applications to their current employer for tracking and fee payment purposes.
   3. All mandatory registrations forms are accurate/updated and submitted to the FCB in a timely manner.
   4. All mandatory certification application forms are completed and submitted to the FCB on behalf of each applicant.
   5. All certification fees are paid or billed appropriately on behalf of each applicant.
   6. Certification examination registration occurs, and all administration policies and procedures are communicated to applicants.
   7. Trained proctors are present to administer examinations.
   8. Receive and route score reporting and retesting/rescheduling of examinations occur on behalf of applicants.

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[3] 65C-33.002(5), F.A.C.,

Attachments

Legal and Programmatic Authority

Florida Statutes establishes independent, third-party credentialing as an employment requirement for child welfare service providers in s. 402.40 Child welfare training and certification. The following sections identify statute specific to certification and third-party credentialing entity responsibilities and requirements:

402.40 Child welfare training and certification. —

(1)   LEGISLATIVE INTENT.—In order to enable the state to provide a systematic approach to staff development and training for persons providing child welfare services that will meet the needs of such staff in their discharge of duties, it is the intent of the Legislature that the Department of Children and Families work in collaboration with the child welfare stakeholder community, including department-approved third-party credentialing entities, to ensure that staff have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to competently provide child welfare services. It is the intent of the Legislature that **each person providing child welfare services in this state earns and maintains a professional certification from a professional credentialing entity that is approved by the Department of Children and Families.**

(3)   THIRD-PARTY CREDENTIALING ENTITIES. —

The department shall approve one or more third-party credentialing entities for the purpose of developing and administering child welfare certification programs for persons who provide child welfare services. A third-party credentialing entity shall request such approval in writing from the department. To obtain approval, the third-party credentialing entity must:

(a)   Establish professional requirements and standards that applicants must achieve to obtain a child welfare certification and to maintain such certification.

(b)   Develop and apply core competencies and examination instruments according to nationally recognized certification and psychometric standards.

(c)   Maintain a professional code of ethics and a disciplinary process that apply to all persons holding child welfare certification.

(d)   Maintain a database, accessible to the public, of all persons holding child welfare certification, including any history of ethical violations.

(e)   Require annual continuing education for persons holding child welfare certification.

(f)   Administer a continuing education provider program to ensure that only qualified providers offer continuing education opportunities for certificate holders.

(g)   Maintain an advisory committee, including representatives from each region of the department, each sheriff's office providing child protective services, and each community-based care lead agency, who shall be appointed by the organization they represent. The third-party credentialing entity may appoint additional members to the advisory committee.

The Florida Certification Board applied for approved third-party credentialing status with the Department in 2011; the Department granted approval. The Florida Certification Board administers comprehensive child welfare certification programs to meet statutory requirements and stakeholder needs. The FCB is a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence and follows National Commission for Accrediting Agencies (NCCA) standards for valid, reliable, and defensible professional credentialing programs. This document reflects NCCA standards 3 Education, Training, and Certification, 6 – Information for Candidates, and 7 – Program Policies.

Core Competencies and Pre-service Training

Florida Statutes and the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) establish the relationship – and separations – between the roles of the FCB to establish core competencies and DCF to approve core competencies and related pre-service curricula. Industry practice requires a sequential process to establish valid and reliable core competencies that guide the development of competency-based curriculum development.

Relevant statutes and NCCA standards that underpin the development of core competencies and training for professional certification programs include:

> 402.40 (2)(d)   "Core competency" means the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to carry out work responsibilities.

> 402.40 (2)(f)   "Pre-service curriculum" means the minimum statewide training content based upon the core competencies which is made available to all persons providing child welfare services.

402.40 (3)(a) and (b) directs FCB to:

> Establish professional requirements and standards that applicants must achieve to obtain a child welfare certification and to maintain such certification.

> Develop and apply core competencies and examination instruments according to nationally recognized certification and psychometric standards.

402.40 (5)(a) directs DCF to "approve the core competencies and related pre-service curricula that ensures that each person delivering child welfare services obtains the knowledge, skills, and abilities to competently carry out his or her work responsibilities."

NCCA Standard 3: Education, Training, and Certification: Appropriate separation must exist between certification and any education or training functions to avoid conflicts of interest and to protect the integrity of the certification program.

NCCA Standard 14: Job Analysis: The certification program must have a study that defines and analyzes descriptions of job-related elements linked to the purpose of the credential.

NCCA Standard 13: Panel Composition: The certification program must use panels of qualified subject-matter experts (SMEs) to participate in job analysis, item development, standard setting, scoring, and other examination-related activities.

Program Development Summary

The first step is to establish the core competencies through a structured process. The FCB conducts a formal Role Delineation Study (RDS) to conduct the job tasks analysis, which results in core competencies and a weighted exam blueprint to guide training, assessment, and examination decisions.

The Department is actively involved in establishing core competencies by (1) serving as SMEs for the RDS and (2) encouraging credentialed and experienced employees to participate in the validation process. The active involvement of DCF SMEs ensures approval of competencies and their use as the foundation of competency-based training curricula.

To ensure all employees, regardless of employer, have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform their role, the Department develops, implements, and maintains a single-state curriculum that encompasses and exceeds the minimum competencies established for Child Protective Investigators, Case Managers, and Licensing Counselors.

Successful completion of the traditional OR Florida Academy pre-service training program is a requirement of certification.

The FCB does not oversee or regulate pre-service training curriculum; the FCB verifies the applicant's successful completion of the training requirement.

Provisional Certification Requirements – Traditional Pre-service Applicant

REQUIREMENT	New Employee – Traditional Pre-service Applicant
Background Screening	Pass a Level 2 employment background screening as specified by s.435.04, F.S. In lieu of multiple background screenings, the employer completes the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Formal Education	Hold a bachelor's degree or higher, issued by colleges or universities accredited by federally recognized accrediting bodies at the time of degree conferral. Applicants hired under the Department's Enhanced Workforce Policy waive the degree requirement. In lieu of official transcripts, the employer completes the *Formal Education Verification Form*. The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Formal Education Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Traditional Pre-service Training	Complete the traditional pre-service curriculum of CORE and discipline-specific track curricula. In lieu of training certificates, the training provider identifies each person in a class who successfully completed the curriculum on a single *Pre-service Training Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Pre-service Training Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Certification Exam	Take the CWPI or the CWCM Exam after completing the traditional pre-service curriculum. Applicants who pass the exam earn provisional certification; those who do not pass may be eligible to retest. *Note: employers determine the number of re-tests they will allow before removal from a position that requires certification.*
Re-test	Retests are for applicants who, after failing the exam, maintain employment in a position requiring certification. There is a 3-day wait period between test attempts. Registration and fee payment occurs before retesting. The Point of Contact works directly with the FCB to schedule and administer retests.
Provisional Credential Award	Applicants who pass the exam are awarded provisional certification. Credentials are issued through the FCB's online certification system. The effective date is the date the Certification Specialist triggers the system to issue the credential. The expiration date is 12 months later. The 12-month provisional period is the time to complete on-the-job experience, supervision, and observation requirements to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC. The upgrade requirements are the same, regardless of how the person earned the provisional credential. See the *Full Certification Requirements: CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC* attachment for details.

Provisional Certification Requirements –Florida Academy Applicant

REQUIREMENT	New Employee – DCF Florida Academy Pre-service Program Application Route
Background Screening	Pass a Level 2 employment background screening as specified by s.435.04, F.S.
	In lieu of multiple background screenings, the employer completes the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.*
	The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Formal Education	Hold a bachelor's degree or higher, issued by colleges or universities accredited by federally recognized accrediting bodies at the time of degree conferral.
	Applicants hired under the Department's Enhanced Workforce Policy waive the degree requirement.
	In lieu of official transcripts, the employer completes the *Formal Education Verification* form.
	The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Formal Education Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Florida Academy Training	Complete the Florida Academy Foundations curriculum and **discipline-specific** track curricula.
	In lieu of training certificates, the training provider identifies each person in a class who successfully completed the curriculum on a single *Florida Academy Training Verification Form.*
	The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Florida Academy Training Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Concepts and Procedures Checklist	Complete the FCB *Concepts and Procedures Checklist.*
	Document discussions and observations on a single *Concepts and Procedures Checklist.*
	Applicants maintain the *Concepts and Procedures Checklist*, ensuring that all discussions and observations are initialed and dated and that each facilitator completes an attestation.
	The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Concepts and Procedures Checklist* to the FCB for processing.
Child Welfare Foundations (CWF) Exam	Take the *FCB Child Welfare Foundations Exam* **after** completing the *Concept and Procedures Checklis*t and all classroom, field, and self-paced modules in the Florida Academy's Foundations curricula.
	A passing score is required before an applicant may enroll in the Florida Academy Specialty Track: Protective Investigations curricula.
	Retests are for applicants who, after failing the exam, maintain employment in a position requiring certification. There is a 3-day wait period between test attempts. Registration and fee payment occurs before retesting.
	The Point of Contact works directly with the FCB to schedule and administer retests.
Direct Supervision/ Competency Assessment	Complete two separate, independent competency demonstration assessments of performance; document assessments on the FCB's *Competency Demonstration Assessment Instrument.*
	The immediate supervisor or designee completes one full instrument; one or more qualified evaluators completes the second instrument. Each person conducting an assessment must complete their own, separate instrument, documenting ONLY the competencies assessed.

REQUIREMENT	New Employee – DCF Florida Academy Pre-service Program Application Route
	The Point of Contact collects and submits *Competency Demonstration Assessment Instruments* to the FCB for processing.
Provisional Credential Award	Credentials are issued through the FCB's online certification system. The effective date is the date the Certification Specialist triggers the system to issue the credential. The expiration date is 12 months later. The 12-month provisional period is the time to complete on-the-job experience, supervision, and observation requirements to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC. The upgrade requirements are the same, regardless of how the person earned the provisional credential. See the *Full Certification Requirements: CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC* attachment for details.

Provisional Certification Requirements –Experienced Employee Applicant

REQUIREMENT	Experienced Employee CWPI-P, CWCM-P, or CWLC-P Application Route
Background Screening	Pass a Level 2 employment background screening as specified by s.435.04, F.S. In lieu of multiple background screenings, the employer completes the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Formal Education	Hold a bachelor's degree or higher, issued by colleges or universities accredited by federally recognized accrediting bodies at the time of degree conferral. Applicants hired under the Department's Enhanced Workforce Policy waive the degree requirement. In lieu of official transcripts, the employer completes the *Formal Education Verification Form*. The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Formal Education Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Certification Exam	Take the CWPI or the CWCM Exam. Applicants who pass the exam earn provisional certification. Applicants who do not pass the exam are not eligible to retest; they must complete the traditional or academy training curricula before retesting.
Provisional Credential Award	Credentials are issued through the FCB's online certification system. The effective date is the date the Certification Specialist triggers the system to issue the credential. The expiration date is 12 months later. The 12-month provisional period is the time to complete on-the-job experience, supervision, and observation requirements to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC. The upgrade requirements are the same, regardless of how the person earned the provisional credential. See the *Full Certification Requirements: CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC* for details.

Provisional Certification Requirements – MSW/BSW Intern Applicant

REQUIREMENT	MSW/BSW Intern Application Route
Background Screening	Pass a Level 2 employment background screening as specified by s.435.04, F.S. In lieu of multiple background screenings, the employer completes the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Formal Education	BSW and MSW interns waive the formal education requirement for provisional certification. The degree requirement applies when upgrading to full certification.
Content Specific Training	Complete the Child Welfare Certificate Program specified by their School of Social Work and any training required by the intern site employers. The College of Social Work verifies successful completion of their Child Welfare Certificate Program as dictated by college policy. The training provider verifies successful completion of employer-dictated training on the FCB *Individualized Training Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the College of Social Work documentation and the *Individualized Training Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Certification Exam	Intern applicants take either the CWPI or the CWCM exam after completing specific college coursework and employer-required training. Provisional certification is issued to interns who pass the exam Retests are for applicants who, after failing the exam, maintain employment in a position requiring certification. There is a 3-day wait period between test attempts. Registration and fee payment occurs before retesting. The Point of Contact works directly with the FCB to schedule and administer retests.
Provisional Credential Award	Applicants who pass the exam earn provisional certification. Credentials are issued through the FCB's online certification system. The effective date is the date the Certification Specialist triggers the system to issue the credential. The expiration date is 12 months later. The 12-month provisional period is the time to complete on-the-job experience, supervision, and observation requirements to upgrade to the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC. The upgrade requirements are the same, regardless of how the person earned the provisional credential. See the *Full Certification Requirements: CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC* attachment for details.

Full Certification/Upgrade Requirements: CWPI, CWCM, and CWLC

The provisional period is specifically designed to support on-the-job learning and competency development. Regardless of the final credential pursued, provisionally certified staff must complete discipline specific on-the-job experience, supervision, and assessment requirements. **These requirements, along with the application for the CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC credential, must be completed before the provisional credential expires.**

If necessary, employees may request an extension of their provisional certification for valid reasons. For more information, refer to the FCB's Provisional Certification Extension policy.

REQUIREMENT	Provisionally Certified Applicants seeking Full CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC
On-the-Job Experience Requirement	Complete a minimum of 1,040 hours of consecutive, full-time **discipline-specific** work where the applicant has primary case responsibility or is a direct supervisor of individuals with primary case responsibility. Eligible work experience occurs during the provisional period. Employers document eligible work experience on the *Work Experience Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Work Experience Verification Form* and any necessary position descriptions to the FCB for processing.
Supervision Requirement	Complete a minimum of 40 hours of **discipline-specific** supervision focused on building competency. 20 hours must be individual, one-on-one supervision; the other 20 hours may be one-on-one and/or group supervision. Eligible supervision occurs in at least 15-minute increments. Qualified Supervisors document supervision on the *On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form*. A single supervisor can document multiple experiences on one form; however, each unique supervisor must complete a separate form. The Point of Contact collects and submits the *On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Forms* to the FCB for processing.
Field Observations Requirement	Complete six (6) field observations and follow-up case consultation with a qualified supervisor. Two (2) of the six (6) observations may occur in professional-, office-, or agency-based settings; the remaining observations must occur in the field and involve interactions with children, families, caregivers, or similar case participants. At a minimum, each visit/observation and follow-up consultation should last one-and-a-half (1.5) to two (2) hours.
Assessment of Competence	Supervisors evaluate the job performance of the applicant and determine if any competency concerns exist. If so, the observation is a learning experience and is not eligible to count toward the required observations.
Credential Award/Issue & Expiration Dates	The CWPI, CWCM or CWLC credential is issued through the FCB's online certification system after approving and processing the following requirements: Active provisional credential at time of application Active Upgrade Application submitted/application fee paid Work Experience Requirement documented and approved Supervision Requirements documented and approved Field Observation and Assessment of Competency documented and approved The effective date is the date the Certification Specialist triggers the system to issue the credential.

REQUIREMENT	Provisionally Certified Applicants seeking Full CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC
	The credential's first expiration date depends on the initial issue date. Credentials issued in the months of November through July expire for the first time on the upcoming October 31st. Renewed credentials are valid for a period of two (2) years. Credentials issued in August, September and October expire for the first time the following October 31st. Renewed credentials are valid for a period of two (2) years. After the first renewal, the credential will expire on October 31st every other year. Renewed credentials are valid for a period of two (2) years.

CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC Additional Discipline Application Route

REQUIREMENT	CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC Additional Discipline Application
Content Specific Training	Complete discipline-specific training curriculum. CWPI applicants must complete the PI Specialty Track curriculum CWCM applicants must complete the Case Management Specialty Track curriculum CWLC applicants must submit an agency-developed training plan. The training provider completes the FCB *Child Welfare Training Verification Form* and submits it to the FCB for processing.
On-the-Job Experience Requirement	Complete a minimum of 520 hours of consecutive, full-time **discipline-specific** work where the applicant has primary case responsibility or is a direct supervisor of individuals with primary case responsibility. Eligible work experience occurs during the provisional period. Employers document eligible work experience on the FCB *Related Work Experience Verification Form.* The Point of Contact collects and submits the *Work Experience Verification Form* to the FCB for processing.
Supervision Requirement	Complete a minimum of 20 hours of **discipline-specific** supervision focused on building competency. 10 hours must be individual, one-on-one supervision; the other 10 hours may be one-on-one and/or group supervision. Eligible supervision occurs in at least 15-minute increments. Qualified Supervisors document supervision on the *On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form*. A single supervisor can document multiple experiences on one form; however, each unique supervisor must complete a separate form. The Point of Contact collects and submits the *On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Forms* to the FCB for processing.
Field Observations Requirement	Complete three (3) field observations and follow-up case consultation with a qualified supervisor. One (1) of the three (3) observations may occur in professional-, office-, or agency-based settings; the remaining observations must occur in the field and involve interactions with children, families, caregivers, or similar case participants. At a minimum, each visit/observation and follow-up consultation should last one-and-a-half (1.5) to two (2) hours.
Assessment of Competence	Supervisors evaluate the job performance of the applicant and determine if any competency concerns exist. If so, the observation is a learning experience and is not eligible to count toward the required observations.
Credential Award	The CWPI, CWCM or CWLC credential is issued through the FCB's online certification system after approving and processing the following requirements: Active CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC credential at time of application Active Additional Discipline Application submitted/application fee paid Training Requirement documented and approved Work Experience Requirement documented and approved

REQUIREMENT	CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC Additional Discipline Application
	Supervision Requirements documented and approved
	Field Observation and Assessment of Competency documented and approved
	The effective date is the date the Certification Specialist triggers the system to issue the credential.
	The initial expiration date of the credential is determined by the primary credential's expiration date. The credential will first renew on the same date as the primary credential's upcoming October 31st expiration.
	Renewed credentials are valid for a period of two (2) years.

Provisional and Full Certification Application Checklists Traditional Pre-service Model

Child welfare certification applicants receive hands on support from their employer and the employer identified Point of Contact. The primary role of a point of contact is to liaison with FCB to support the application and examination activities on behalf of eligible applicants. There are some activities that the applicant must complete. Allowing another person to complete these tasks is a violation of the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Applicant Responsibility Provisional Certification Requirements	Point Of Contact Responsibility Provisional Certification Requirements
❑ Current employment ❑ Personal certification account with FCB ❑ Online provisional certification application ❑ Pre-service training ❑ *Exam Confidentiality Agreement* Form ❑ CWPI or CWCM exam ❑ $100 Application Fee addressed ❑ $100 CCWS Exam Fee addressed	❑ Ensure applicant accounts are complete and reflect personal email and U.S. mailing addresses. The POC can establish this at the beginning of training. ❑ Ensure provisional application is complete and fees are paid/addressed ❑ *Application and Exam Registration* forms complete and submitted ❑ *Level 2 Criminal History Eligibility Verification* forms are routed, completed, and submitted ❑ *Formal Education Verification* forms are routed, completed, and submitted ❑ *Exam Confidentiality* forms are completed and submitted ❑ Verify *Application and Exam Registration* form accuracy and resubmit with necessary corrections within 10 days of the test date. ❑ Record unofficial score ❑ Receive and route official score reports ❑ Assist applicants in addressing fee payments
Applicant Responsibility **CW UPGRADE Certification Requirements**	**Point Of Contact Responsibility** **CW UPGRADE Certification Requirements**
❑ Current employment ❑ Seek out and respond to intensive supervision ❑ 1040 hours (6 months) work experience ❑ 40 hours individual and group supervision ❑ 6 field observations of core competency ❑ Online CW UPGRADE application ❑ $100 CW Upgrade Application Fee addressed	❑ Collect and submit Work Experience Verification forms/position descriptions ❑ Collect and submit OTJ Supervision and Competency Verification forms ❑ Ensure CW UPGRADE application is complete, and fees are paid/addressed

Provisional and Full Certification Application Checklists Florida Academy Pre-service Model

Child welfare certification applicants receive hands on support from their employer and the employer identified Point of Contact. The primary role of a point of contact is to liaison with FCB to support the application and examination activities on behalf of eligible applicants. There are some activities that the applicant must complete. Allowing another person to complete these tasks is a violation of the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Applicant Responsibility Provisional Certification Requirements	Point Of Contact Responsibility Provisional Certification Requirements
❑ Current employment ❑ Personal certification account with FCB ❑ Online provisional certification application ❑ Concepts and Procedures Checklist ❑ Florida Academy Foundations curricula ❑ *Exam Confidentiality Agreement* Form ❑ Child Welfare Foundations (CWF) exam ❑ Florida Academy Foundations Discipline Specific curricula ❑ Competency Demonstration Assessment Instrument – supervisor version ❑ Competency Demonstration Assessment Instrument – qualified evaluator version ❑ $100 Application Fee addressed ❑ $100 CCWS Exam Fee addressed	❑ Ensure applicant accounts are complete and reflect personal email and mailing addresses ❑ Ensure provisional application is complete and fees are paid/addressed ❑ *Application and Exam Registration* forms complete and submitted ❑ *Level 2 Criminal History Eligibility Verification* forms are routed, completed, and submitted ❑ *Formal Education Verification* forms are routed, completed, and submitted ❑ *Exam Confidentiality* forms are completed and submitted ❑ Verify *Application and Exam Registration* form accuracy and resubmit with necessary corrections within 10 days of the test date. ❑ *Training Verification Form* is completed and submitted ❑ Record unofficial score ❑ Receive and route official score reports ❑ Assist applicants in addressing fee payments
Applicant Responsibility CW UPGRADE Certification Requirements	Point Of Contact Responsibility CW UPGRADE Certification Requirements
❑ Current employment ❑ Seek out and respond to intensive supervision ❑ 1040 hours (6 months) work experience ❑ 40 hours individual and group supervision ❑ 6 field observations of core competency ❑ Online CW UPGRADE application ❑ $100 CW Upgrade Application Fee addressed	❑ Collect and submit Work Experience Verification forms/position descriptions ❑ Collect and submit OTJ Supervision and Competency Verification forms ❑ Ensure CW UPGRADE application is complete, and fees are paid/addressed

Mandatory Forms

Provisional Certification Forms – Traditional Pre-service Applicant

Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.

Formal Education Verification Form

Exam Confidentiality Agreement

Pre-service Training Verification Form

Provisional Certification Forms – Florida Academy Pre-service Applicant

Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.

Formal Education Verification Form

Concepts and Procedures Checklist – includes detailed directions

Exam Confidentiality Agreement

Competency Demonstration Assessment Instrument – includes detailed directions

Florida Academy Training Verification Form

Provisional Certification Forms – Experienced Applicant

Level 2 Background Screening Eligibility Verification Form.

Formal Education Verification Form

Exam Confidentiality Agreement

Upgrade Applicants (all provisionally certified staff)

Work Experience Verification Form

On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form

Training Class and Exam Registrations

Application and Exam Registration Form

Exam Proctor Administration Report