

## **Frequently asked questions & answers about the CDA Credential**

### **Q. What does a Candidate have to do to be eligible?**

A. Candidates must be 18 years old; have a high school diploma or equivalent; have 480 hours of experience working with young children; and have 120 clock hours of formal training.

### **Q. What does the Candidate have to do to complete the assessment?**

A. Candidates must meet eligibility requirements and complete the documentation collection, including the Professional Resource File, Formal Observation, Parent Opinion Questionnaires. Then, meet with the Council Representative to complete an oral interview and written test.

### **Q. What is the cost for the CDA Direct Assessment System?**

A. The cost is \$325. Application packets are available for \$18 (plus \$5.00 shipping and handling) and provide instructions for Candidates to prepare for assessment.

### **Q. Is there scholarship money to help pay the CDA fee?**

A. Yes. The CDA Scholarship Resource list (see "CDA Scholarships" on this website) provides state-funding information. You should contact your state office for eligibility information. IF you are income eligible, the state MAY pay for all or part of the training costs, and the state MAY also pay the assessment fee.

### **Q. Does the center have to be open for the Verification Visit?**

A. No. Once the Application is complete, the Verification Visit can take place at an appropriate location.

### **Q. Where can I obtain CDA training?**

A. Candidates must complete all formal education hours under the auspices of an agency or organization that has expertise in early childhood teacher preparation. The training could be for college credit or for no credit. The Council does not accept training from independent consultants or from conference workshops.

### **Q. Can Candidates in a high school vocational program count their training hours as formal education?**

A. Yes. However, Candidates can't apply for assessment until they are 18 years or older and have their high school diplomas.

### **Q. Who determines if an agency has expertise in early childhood teacher preparation, the agency or the Council?**

A. Since the Council doesn't have a formal approval process, the agency determines its expertise. It must have a training coordinator or specialist in charge of its formal training program.

**Q. What should a training agency list on the certificate to verify a Candidate's formal education?**

A. The certificate should include the agency's name and address, Candidate's name and date of the training session, content area, the number of hours successfully completed, and authorized signature.

**Q. What happens if a Candidate doesn't pass the written assessment?**

A. The decision about whether to issue a CDA credential will be made after weighing all evidence of the Candidate's competence. The written test is only one part of the evidence. Other evidence of stronger skills may balance some evidence of weaker skills and competence.

**Q. What is the role of the Advisor?**

A. The Advisor observes the Candidate while working as a lead teacher and uses the CDA Observation Instrument to record this observation(s). The Council does not require Advisors to "train" Candidates, although many Advisors are also trainers.

**Q. Are application and training materials available in Spanish?**

A. Yes. All *Competency Standards* books, all application packets (including documentation) and *Essentials (Fundamentos)*, *Field Advisor's Guide (Guía del Asesor de Práctica)* and *Seminar Instructor's Guide (Guía del Instructor de Seminario)* are currently available in Spanish.

**Q. Which Candidates use the Spanish materials?**

A. Candidates who are employed in programs where their everyday work requires them to speak Spanish to the children use these materials. These Candidates will complete an assessment in Spanish (Monolingual - Spanish) to earn the CDA Credential.

**Q. I speak two languages. Can I apply for a bilingual credential?**

A. Candidates who wish to obtain a bilingual credential must work in a bilingual setting that requires the Candidate to speak both languages daily and consistently and have a working knowledge of two languages.

**Q. How can I renew my CDA Credential?**

A. The initial CDA Credential is valid for a period of three years. Subsequent renewals are required every five years. The renewal process involves three steps: (1) purchase CDA Renewal Packet (\$13.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling); (2) compile required documentations; and (3) mail the required documents and \$50 renewal fee to the council.