



CCEI3001: The CDA Credentialing Process Handout

Welcome to CCEI3001:

This course is designed to provide students with general information about the steps involved in obtaining a CDA Credential from the Council for Professional Recognition. Students are encouraged to visit the Council's website at www.cdacouncil.org for complete and up-to-date information on requirements and the credentialing process.

Objectives:

By taking notes on the handout and successfully answering assessment questions, participants will meet the following objectives as a result of taking this course:

- Identify general facts and benefits related to the CDA Credential
- Recognize the settings in which CDA credentials are awarded
- Recall the number of Competency Standards and Functional Areas included in the CDA credential
- Identify prerequisite requirements for the CDA Credential
- Recognize requirements related to choosing an appropriate PD specialist and the role they play in the CDA Credential process
- Identify the steps included in the CDA Credential application process
- Identify steps required for the renewal of a CDA Credential

References:

Course Notes:

Use the space below to make notes about important content from the course.

Terms Used by The Council for Professional Recognition

Candidate:

CDA:

Competence/Competency:

Competency Standards:

The CDA Competency Standards are divided into 6 Competency Goals:

1. To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment.
2. To advance physical and intellectual competence.
3. To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance.
4. To establish positive and productive relationships with families.
5. To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs.
6. To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

The Council for Professional Recognition:

Credential:

Functional Areas:

The 6 CDA Competency Standards are sorted into 13 Functional Areas:

1. Safe
2. Healthy
3. Learning environment
4. Physical
5. Cognitive
6. Communication
7. Creative
8. Self
9. Social
10. Guidance
11. Families
12. Program management
13. Professionalism

Professional Development Specialist (PD Specialist):

Professional Portfolio:

The Portfolio consists of the following items:

- Transcripts/certificates/letters; documentation of your professional education
- Family Questionnaires: These should be submitted to families six months before applying for your credential. You will need to review them and share a reflection of them on your Competency Goal IV.)
- Six Reflective Statements of Competence
- The Resource Collection
- The Professional Philosophy Statement

Verification Visit:

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential

A Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™:

Benefits of becoming a CDA:

- Advance your career.
- Meet job requirements.
- Reinforce your commitment to early childhood education.
- Understand developmentally appropriate practice and different approaches to teaching.
- Evaluating your work as it compares to national standards and improving skills.
- Increasing confidence in the workplace while providing parents with peace of mind
- Growing as a professional and improving existing skills to the benefit of young children and yourself.
- Receiving one-on-one advice, support, and feedback from early childhood professionals.
- Earning a nationally recognized credential.

Consider the following before committing to becoming a CDA:

To earn and maintain the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™, Candidates must:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

CDA Settings

Center-Based Programs

Preschool Endorsement

Infant/Toddler Endorsement

Family Child Care Programs

Home Visitor Programs

Bilingual Specialization

CDA Competency Standards

The *CDA Competency Standards* are:

There are _____ *Competency Standards*:

The Competency Standards are defined in more detail in the _____ *Functional Areas*, which:

CDA Competency Standards and Functional Areas

Competency Standard	Functional Areas
I: To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment.	1. Safe 2. Healthy 3. Learning Environment
II: To advance physical and intellectual competence.	4. Physical 5. Cognitive 6. Communication 7. Creative
III: To support social and emotional development and to provide positive guidance.	8. Self 9. Social 10. Guidance
IV: To establish positive and productive relationships with families.	11. Families
V: To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs.	12. Program Management
VI: To maintain a commitment to professionalism.	13. Professionalism

Preparing for the CDA Credential

To apply for the CDA Credential, you will be asked to demonstrate your competence in an early childhood education setting based on the **6 CDA Competency Goals and 13 Functional Areas**.

You may apply for the CDA Credential only if:

-
-
-

Before submitting your CDA application, you need to complete the following prerequisites:

Within the past 5 years:

Formal training: You must complete **120 hours** of formal early childhood education training, covering the growth and development of children in your specific age setting, with no fewer than 10 training hours in each of the following subject areas:

- Planning a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Advancing children’s physical and intellectual development.
- Supporting children’s social and emotional development.
- Building productive relationships with families.
- Managing an effective program operation.
- Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.
- Observing and recording children’s behavior.
- Understanding the principles of child development and learning.

Within 3 years before you apply:

480 hours of professional experience:

Within 6 months before you apply:

Family Questionnaires:

The Professional Portfolio:

The Portfolio consists of:

- Documentation of your professional education.
- Completed family questionnaires.
- Six Reflective Statements of Competence.
- Resource collection items.
- A Professional Philosophy Statement.

The Professional Portfolio

Per the CDA Council, your Professional Portfolio must include:

1. My CDA Professional Portfolio cover sheet provides greater details on the specific order of portfolio components. It can be used as a checklist as you build your Portfolio to ensure that your completed Portfolio contains all of the required contents. You will find this cover sheet in the CDA booklet.
2. Summary of My CDA Education cover sheet. You will also include a copy of your transcripts/certificate of completion behind this sheet in your booklet.
3. Family Questionnaires Summary Sheet (details listed below). You will include the completed family questionnaires behind the cover sheet. These will be found before the cover sheet in your CDA Competency Standards book, and you'll need to make copies to submit to families.
4. Six Reflective Statements of Competence, followed by the related Resource Collection items, as outlined on the My CDA Professional Portfolio cover sheet (details listed below).
5. Your Professional Philosophy Statement summarizes your professional viewpoint and may consider new ideas you learned while building your Portfolio.

Documentation of Professional Education

Family Questionnaires

Reflective Statements of Competence

Resource Collection

Your **Resource Collection** should contain at least _____ **items organized by the Competency Standard area and properly labeled:**

Professional Philosophy Statement

Organizing Your CDA Professional Portfolio

Your CDA Professional Portfolio Template

Be sure to review the portfolio requirements lists in the Competency Standards book. You can use the following list to assemble your CDA professional portfolio in an organized manner:

1. Portfolio cover sheet
2. CDA Education cover sheet
3. Transcripts/Diploma
4. Family Questionnaire cover sheet
5. Family Questionnaires

6. Competency Goal I: To Establish and Maintain a Safe, Healthy Learning Environment
 - a. CDA Resource Collection for Goal I-1: CPR and First Aid Training
 1. A copy of your **valid** certificate obtained within the past 3 years.
 2. Cards of completion for a first-aid course.
 - b. CDA Resource Collection for Goal I-2: Weekly Menu
 - c. CDA Resource Collection for Goal I-3: Lesson Plan
 1. A sample of a weekly plan that includes goals for children's learning and development, a brief description of planned learning experiences, and accommodations for children with special needs.

7. Competency Goal II: To Advance Children’s Physical and Intellectual Competence
 - a. CDA Resource Collection for Goal II: Nine Learning Experiences
 1. Each learning experience should be clearly labeled and placed on a separate page.
8. Competency Goal III: To Support Children’s Social and Emotional Development and to Provide Positive Guidance
 - a. CDA Resource Collection for Goal III: Ten Book Bibliographies
 1. Your list of 10 developmentally age-appropriate children’s books that you have used with young children.
9. Competency Goal IV: To Establish Positive and Productive Relationships with Families
 - a. CDA Resource Collection for Goal IV-1: Family Counseling
 - b. CDA Resource Collection for Goal IV-2: Family Counseling
 - c. CDA Resource Collection for Goal IV-3: Two Contacts
 - d. CDA Resource Collection for Goal IV-4: How Young Children Learn and Develop
10. Competency Goal V: To Ensure a Well-Run, Purposeful Program Responsive to Participant Needs
 - a. CDA Resource Collection for Goal V: Record-Keeping Forms
 - b. Three samples of record-keeping forms and observations
11. Competency Goal VI: To Maintain a Commitment to Professionalism
 - a. CDA Resource Collection for Goal VI-1A: Child Care Regulations
 - b. CDA Resource Collection for Goal VI-1B: Qualification Requirements for Personnel
 - c. CDA Resource Collection for Goal VI-1C: Ratio
 - d. CDA Resource Collection for Goal VI-2: Early Childhood Associations
 - e. CDA Resource Collection for Goal VI-3: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
12. Professional Philosophy Statement

Professional Development (PD) Specialists

Identifying a Professional Development (PD) Specialist

There are 3 ways to find a PD Specialist:

-
-
-

The Role of a PD Specialist

In the R.O.R. Model™, the PD Specialist's main tasks include:

- **R**eview
- **O**bserve
- **R**eflect

PD Specialist Eligibility Requirements

Personal

- Must be able to relate to people of various racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Must know local, state, and national requirements and standards for child care programs serving children aged birth through 5 years.
- Must be able to schedule and conduct Verification Visits during normal operating hours of early childhood programs.
- PD Specialists conducting bilingual Verification Visits must be bilingual.
- PD Specialists conducting monolingual Verification Visits must speak the language of the assessment.

Education

PD Specialists must hold a Baccalaureate or Associate degree from an accredited college or university in one of the following disciplines:

- Early Childhood Education/Child Development
- Elementary Education/Early Childhood Education
- Home Economics/Child Development

The degree must include, at minimum, 18 semester or 24 quarter hours of coursework in Early Childhood Education/Child Development, studying children from birth through 5 years.

Experience

PD Specialists must meet all of the requirements in one of the three combinations of experience outlined as options 1 or 2 that follow:

Option 1

Option 2

Exceptions to Professional Development (PD) Specialist Eligibility Requirements

Conflict of Interest

Relationships with Candidates considered unacceptable for serving in the PD Specialist role are:

-
-
-

Completing the CDA Application

Before you submit the CDA Credential™ Application:

Be sure to order the book that matches the credential you seek to achieve (preschool, Infant/toddler, family child care, or home visitor).

Requirements

The CDA Application will ask you to:

- Provide Personal Information
- Confirm that you meet eligibility requirements.
- Confirm that you completed all prerequisites.
- Confirm your CDA Setting.
- Select English or Spanish as your preferred language for the CDA Exam.
- Select if you need a special accommodation.
- Provide the identification number of your CDA Professional Development Specialist.
 - As shared earlier, before you apply for your CDA, the Council requires you to identify a CDA Professional Development Specialist who will agree to conduct your Verification Visit. Once the PD Specialist agrees, he or she will provide you with their Identification Number. This number must be included on your CDA application. You need to select a PD Specialist who can provide an Identification Number because doing so ensures that the Council has trained this person.
- Obtain your Program Director's signature.
- Include the application fee (or pay it online).
- Provide an Email Address
 - Although providing an email address is not identified as a required field, there are benefits to providing an email address where indicated on the CDA Application. If the Council has your correct email address, you will be receive:
 - Reminders to schedule your Verification Visit and CDA Exam before the six-month deadline.
 - The Ready to Schedule (discussed later in the course) notice, once your CDA application is reviewed and approved by the Council.
 - A renewal reminder before your CDA Credential expires.
 - Updates about any important changes to the CDA process and Council services.
 - The CouncilLINK monthly e-newsletter, filled with valuable resources and news for the national CDA Community.

- Director’s Permission Statement
- The CDA Application requires the signature of your center/program director to confirm the following:
 - The Verification Visit can happen during the center program’s work hours.
 - During the Verification Visit, you can be observed leading children’s activities.
 - The PD Specialist will be allowed to observe you working with children in your classroom. You and your PD Specialist will be provided a quiet space if you are planning to complete the Review and/or Reflect sessions of your Verification Visit on the premises of your center/ program.
 - If you choose to complete the application online, the Council will request a recommendation to your Director via email.

Payment

Submitting Your Application

When you are confident your application is complete, it is recommended that you make a copy of your records. There are several methods for submitting your application.

Submit by Mail:

Submit via Online Using YourCDA:

Submitting your application online provides the following benefits:

- You can apply anytime.
- You can always save your work and continue later.
- You can check your status anytime.
- You can receive and submit your director or ECE Reviewer recommendation letter electronically.
- You can pay the online fee electronically.
- You can communicate quickly with the Council.
- You can receive automatic updates about where you are in the process.
- You can save \$75.00.

When applying for your initial credential using YourCDA, you need:

-
-
-

Ready to Schedule Notification

Verification Visit

Do not forget to bring the following items to the Verification Visit:

- The original, completed **Professional Portfolio, which should include:**
 - *Transcripts, certificates, documentation of your professional education*
 - *Family Questionnaires*
 - *Resource collection*
 - *Six Reflective Statements of Competence*
 - *Professional Philosophy Statement*
- The **Competency Standards** book you purchased which includes:
 - The blank *Comprehensive Scoring Instrument* your PD Specialist will use.
 - The *Reflective Dialogue worksheet* with the Areas of Strength and Areas of Professional Growth from the Family Questionnaires completed.
- A valid photo identification card (**your ID**).

CDA Exam

After you receive the _____ notice, you may proceed to schedule your CDA Exam. The computer-based exam must be completed at:

You can create a PearsonVUE account online via their website at www.pearsonvue.com/cdaexam to schedule the exam or contact them by phone at (866) 507-5627.

You will need your _____ provided by the Council to complete the exam scheduling.

To Schedule Online:

- Go to <http://www.pearsonvue.com/cdaexam>.
- Click on Schedule an Exam.
- Click on Create a Web Account link.
- Enter your Candidate ID number.
- Verify that all your personal information is correct.
- Set your username and password (note this information on your Candidate Checklist in your Competency Standards Book).
- Search for a testing center nearest to you based on your zip code.
- Schedule, cancel, or reschedule your CDA Exam.

To Schedule by Phone:

- Call 866-507-5627.
- Tell the operator your Candidate ID number and your name, and request to schedule your exam.
- Verify all your personal information.
- Indicate where and when you wish to take the exam.

The Exam Format

Preparation for the Exam

Earning Your CDA Credential

Renewing Your CDA Credential

A CDA Credential is valid for ___ years from the award date and must be renewed every ___ years after that.

Renewal Criteria

All CDA Renewal Candidates must meet the following 5 criteria:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Renewal Process

The renewal process involves 3 steps:

1. **Purchase a Renewal Packet:**
2. **Gather required documentation**
3. **Apply for the CDA Renewal:**