

CDA Home Visitor Steps

There are five essential steps to obtaining a CDA Credential.

1. Prepare

Professional Education

To prepare for the CDA Credential, candidates must obtain proof of all education and experience. Proof can include a valid high school diploma or GED, college transcripts, and training certificates.

Candidates must complete 120 hours of professional early childhood education and principles of adult learning, covering the growth and development of children ages birth to 5 years old. No fewer than 10 hours of education must be in each of the eighth CDA Subject Areas. Formal education hours can be for credit or noncredit, they must be earned through an agency or organization with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation. The agency or organization must verify your education in the form of an official transcript, certificate, or letter.

CDA Subject Areas:

- Promoting Health and Safety in the Home Environment
- Enhancing Parents' Skills to Advance Children's Physical and Intellectual Development
- Promoting Parents' Use of Positive Ways to Support Children's Social and Emotional Development
- Understanding Family Systems and Development
- Managing an Effective Program
- Maintaining a Commitment to Professionalism
- Working Across the Child Welfare Continuum
- Understanding Principles of Child Development and Learning

Work Experience

Paid or volunteer hours are accepted as work experience. Babysitting, Before and After School Programs, Sunday school programs, and Drop-in Programs are not eligible settings where a Candidate can prove competence around the Competency Standards, and experience hours in these settings should not be counted towards the 480 hours of experience.

Professional Portfolio

The CDA Professional Portfolio is a:

- Requirement for obtaining a Child Development Associate credential.
- Collection of resources to help you in your work with children and families.
- Method for the CDA Professional Development (PD) Specialist to evaluate your competence.
- Way to showcase your own philosophy about your work with young children and their families.



The completed CDA Professional Portfolio is a tool that you will use during your career in early childhood education and can be used as a reference manual.

Your Professional Portfolio must have been completed within six months prior to submitting your application for the CDA Credential. The information collected in the portfolio must match the setting for which you are applying.

2. Apply

To apply for the initial CDA Credential, the cost is \$425 for online applications and \$500 for paper applications. Payment for the CDA application is due in full at the time of application.

To apply for the CDA Credential, candidates must:

- Purchase a CDA Competency Standards book in the setting of their work.
- Have a personal email address.
- Provide their center Director's email address.
- Provide their PD Specialist ID number.

PD Specialist

In order to properly complete the application process, candidates will need to find a Home Visitor CDA Professional Development (PD) Specialist to conduct their CDA Verification Visit.

All active CDA PD Specialists can be found on the Council for Professional Recognition's website through the Find-a-PD Specialist Tool.

Candidates enter their work zip code, their classroom setting, and the language in which they teach into the database. The database will generate the names and descriptions of PD Specialists nearest to the Candidate. The Candidate then selects the nearest PD Specialist and sends a request to the PD Specialist to conduct their CDA Verification Visit. If the PD Specialist is available to complete the verification visit, they will respond to the Candidate with their PD Specialist ID number. The PD Specialist ID number is required to complete and submit the CDA application.

Submit the CDA application

Once the CDA application is approved, candidates will receive a **Ready to Schedule** notice via email and their status in the online application will also be updated. Candidates may now schedule the CDA Verification Visit and CDA Exam.

3. Demonstrate

Verification Visit

The CDA Home Visitor PD Specialist conducts the CDA Verification Visit with the Candidate. The verification visit will last four hours. During the CDA Verification Visit, the CDA PD Specialist will observe the candidate at a family's home while they conduct a home visit. The family must have completed the Permission Form prior to the visit. During the visit the PD Specialist:

- Reviews the Candidate's Professional Portfolio.



- Observes the Candidate working with the family.
- Facilitates a reflective dialogue with the Candidate.

At the end of the CDA Verification Visit, the CDA PD Specialist electronically submits the Candidate's scores to the Council.

4. Earn

After the Council receives the results from both the CDA Verification Visit and the CDA Assessor Recommendation, the Council makes a final credentialing decision. Based on this decision, candidates may be awarded their CDA Credential.

5. Renew

All CDA Credentials are valid for a period of three years at which time candidates must renew their Credential.

