

The International Reciprocity Board of Therapeutic Professionals Counselor Certification



120 West Ocean Drive
Cataño Puerto Rico 00962

ADC Certification Requirements

The following document provides information to receive Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselor (ADC) Certification. As you work through this document, please notice the Education Credit Guidelines. Once all requirements are met by the applicant, ADC certification can be made. All approved ADC applicants must pass the IC&RC International Certification Examination.

Testing Information

All applicants must pass the IC&RC International Examination for Alcohol & Drug Counselors (ADC). This will be a computer-based test. Once an application is reviewed and approved, the applicant will be sent a Certification Test Reservation Form. This form must be completed and returned to the Certification Office along with a \$300.00 test fee. The information supplied on the reservation form by the applicant will be provided to the testing company (ISO-Quality testing). The testing company will notify the applicant via email of all necessary instructions for taking the test along with information on the location of testing centers. The applicant will have six months from notification by the testing company to schedule and take the exam at an approved testing center. Please note that failure to appear at the scheduled testing will result in the forfeiture of the test fee. The testing company will provide additional information on cancellation policies.

Test results on a Pass/Fail basis will be made available upon completion of the exam. Applicants will receive a more detailed exam score letter via mail approximately seven to 10 days following the exam. If an applicant fails the exam, s/he will have to wait a minimum of 90 days before rescheduling the test.

All supervisors who will be completing the Work Verification Form(s) must be made aware that they must mail the form(s) directly back to IRBO. All Work Verification Forms that are submitted by the applicant will render the application void. The verification form(s) must be returned to us directly by the supervisor.



Guidelines for Continuing Education Credit

You must complete the alcohol/drug-specific education and the ethics training within the past ten (10) years. The applicant may go back as far as 20 years for trainings and non-credit courses in the categories of counseling techniques and behavioral sciences. There is no time limit for all academic (credit-bearing) courses in counseling techniques and behavioral sciences if the applicant received a C grade (or higher).

The applicant may be asked to provide an official course description for all academic courses which are being submitted for consideration, in addition to transcripts. If transcripts are submitted, they must be official and cannot be downloaded from the internet.

For initial Certification, IRBO limits Distance Learning (i.e., online courses/programs or correspondence/home study courses) to no more than 30% of the total number of education hours required. Please note that distance learning accrued before January 1, 2017, is not admissible. Also, IRBO will not accept academic credit which is awarded for:

- 1) Prior learning experience
- 2) Any courses certified by use of a challenge examination
- 3) Courses for auditing purposes
- 4) Courses of independent study/research

All academic courses must be specific to alcohol/drug or counseling techniques. These courses must be specific to the category requirements as delineated in the certification criteria. No partial credit is given. Also, please note that IRBO will not provide credit for term and/or research papers.

IRBO will allow 15 hours per academic credit (that is, 45 hours per 3-credit course) for academic courses specific to the certification education requirements. For graded courses, a C grade (or higher) must be received in order to be admissible for Certification.

Information on Included Documentation

All applicants must provide documentation for workshops, conferences, etc. If documentation is not given, credit will not be received. The participant's name must be officially recorded on the certificate by the sponsoring agency. If the applicant affixes his/her own name to any certificate, either by hand or by typing, the certificate will not be accepted. Only an authorized agent of the sponsor of the training may fill in the participant's name by hand. The certificate must also include the offering title, specific dates attended, the location of the training, and the number of approved training hours. Applicants cannot provide brochures, registration forms, canceled checks, sign-in sheets, etc., as proper documentation. For programs that have not received official IRBO approval, the following information must be provided:

- 1.) Training description
- 2.) Name and credentials of instructor(s)
- 3.) Location of training



- 4.) Sponsor(s) of training
- 5.) Program agenda, complete with beginning and ending times for each training segment

Continuing education hours do not include non-program time such as registration, coffee breaks, meals, etc. The minimum acceptable unit of credit for any single training experience is one clock hour (i.e., one clock hour = 60 minutes). Please be advised that IRBO is under no obligation to accept training hours approved by other organizations.

In the following situations, continuing education credit is not admissible: where the applicant provided the training and/or teaching; in-service or on-the-job training; and hours accrued by taking exam preparation workshops or trainings. There may be other items that are not admissible, which are not specifically listed here. If you have a specific instance that is not addressed in these guidelines, do not assume it will be accepted. Contact the Certification Office for questions.

Important Guidelines for ALL Certification Applicants

1. According to the 51% Rule, all applicants must be working and/or living in the territory at least 51% of their time when the application for Certification is placed. (In some specific cases, the Certification Board reserves the right to waive the 51% requirement).
2. Before applying for Certification, all eligibility requirements must be completed.
3. Each applicant must provide all supporting documentation and the review fee or the application will be considered incomplete.
4. If a Certification Application is denied, the applicant may appeal the decision. However, an appeal must be completed in writing within 30 days after receiving notification of a denied application.
5. All applicants must sign an Authorization and Release Form.
6. All applicants must sign a Professional Code of Ethics.

Schedule of Fees

Please note that the fees to complete the Certification Process are as follows:

Application Review Fee – \$150.00 – This fee must be mailed in with your Certification.
Application Exam Fee – \$350.00 – This fee will be paid upon notification.
Certification Fee – \$100.00 – This fee will be paid prior to the issuance of the Certification certificate.

All fees are non-refundable. All fees are subject to change without notice. If applicant sends in the wrong fee amount, serious delays may occur. You may also receive a \$20.00 fee for any check returned to us by our bank.



Requirements to Apply for ADC

A counselor must meet the following criteria in order to qualify for the Certified Alcohol/Drug Abuse Counselor (ADC) level:

A. Work Experience

In order for all applicants to meet the work experience requirement, the applicant must document 6,000 hours (equal to 3 years of full-time work) providing alcohol/drug counseling services under clinical supervision. Supervised work experience may be paid or voluntary experience. The counselor must carry a client caseload and provide the full-range of direct counseling services to clients with a diagnosis of alcohol and/or other drug abuse or dependency. A minimum of six months of the total experience must be acquired in one facility, under one supervisor.

Practicum experience, in order to be considered eligible for the experience requirement, must be of such nature that the counselor has his/her own clients and caseload. He or she must be responsible for maintenance of case records. No more than 1,000 hours of practicum/internship experience can be used to meet the work experience requirement.

Please note that for the ADC, counselors with an Associate's Degree in the behavioral sciences area may waive 1,000 hours of the required 6,000 hours of field experience. Applicants with a Bachelor's Degree in the behavioral sciences area may waive 2,000 hours. Counselors with a Master's Degree (or higher) in Counseling (or a closely related field) may waive 4,000 hours. In order to waive hours, documentation must be provided. This includes an official transcript from a regionally-accredited college or university within the United States or colleges and universities outside of the United States that are deemed equivalent by the IRBO.

B. Education

To meet the education requirement, the applicant must provide documentation of 300 clock hours of continuing education. This continuing education must specifically relate to the knowledge and skills necessary to perform the tasks within the following IC&RC performance domains for alcohol & other drug abuse:

- 1.) Screening, Assessment, and Engagement
- 2.) Treatment Planning, Collaboration, and Referral
- 3.) Counseling
- 4.) Professional and Ethical Responsibilities

The 300 hours must include a minimum of 120 hours of alcohol/drug specific studies, 120 hours of counseling techniques, and 10 hours of ethics training related to the substance abuse field. The remaining 50 hours can fall within the behavioral sciences area.

Please note that Practicums/Field Placements do not meet the Education requirement. However, they will be considered under the sections of Experience and Supervision.



Applicants must complete the alcohol/drug-specific training/education and the ethics training within the past 10 years. Applicants may go back 20 years for trainings and non-credit courses in the categories of counseling techniques and behavioral sciences. There is no time limit provided if a C grade or higher was received in academic (credit-bearing) courses in counseling techniques and behavioral sciences.

Please see The Guidelines for Continuing Education Credit for information regarding proper documentation of education/training.

C. Supervision

All applicants must provide documentation of supervision in the following domains, with a minimum of 10 hours in each domain:

- 1.) Screening, Assessment, and Engagement
- 2.) Treatment Planning, Collaboration, and Referral
- 3.) Counseling
- 4.) Professional and Ethical Responsibilities.

TAP 21 Competencies and the 12 Core Functions are contained within the Domains.

The supervision required will be tiered based on the applicant's highest level of education.

- 300 hours of supervision with a high school diploma or GED
- 250 hours of supervision with an Associate's Degree in the Behavioral Sciences Field
- 200 hours of supervision with a Bachelor's Degree in the Behavioral Sciences Field
- 100 hours of supervision with a Master's (or higher) Degree in Counseling or a closely related field

Please note that supervision documentation does NOT include the time spent performing the function. Rather, it must include all time spent in face-to-face supervision. Individual, group/team supervision, and formal case presentations all apply.

D. International ADC Examination

The applicant must pass the IC&RC's Alcohol and Drug Counselor Examination. More specific information will be provided to the applicant as s/he continues with the Certification process.

E. Recertification

To recertify, you must complete 40 hours of continuing education every two years. You will receive specific recertification information if you attain Certification.



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ADC Application Instruction

The following documents include the instructions for properly completing the Application Packet.

As you complete the following pages, please make note:

As you complete all Work Experience, applicants must provide an official agency job description, signed by the clinical supervisor of record, for each separate work entry.

As you complete the Education Requirement, applicants must provide an official course description for all academic courses, as well as training description for any workshops, seminars, etc., which are being submitted for consideration. Applicants must also include all transcripts and Certificates of Attendance, which must be furnished for documentation purposes. All Certificates of Attendance must have the participant's name officially recorded on the certificate by an agent of the sponsoring agency. Certificates cannot include names handwritten by the applicant. These certificates will not be accepted. Applicants can only apply for Certification once all of the requirements have been met. Approved applicants must pass the IC&RC International Certification Exam.



Important Guidelines for ALL Certification Applicants

1. **Before** applying for Certification, all eligibility requirements must be completed.
2. Each applicant must provide all supporting documentation and the review fee or the application will be considered incomplete. Please note that the Certification process includes two vital steps. The first step is the application review and all requirements and documents must be submitted. All ADC-approved applicants must also pass the IC&RC ADC Exam. Once the applicant passes the test, final processing fees must be made.

Certification is valid for two years. Counselors may renew the Certification by following the Recertification process.

Please note that the fees to complete the Certification Process are as follows:

Application Review Fee – \$150.00 – This fee must be mailed in with your Certification.

Application Exam Fee – \$350.00 – This fee will be paid upon notification.

Certification Fee – \$100.00 – This fee must be paid prior to the issuance of the Certification certificate.

All fees are non-refundable. All fees are subject to change without notice. If the applicant sends in the wrong fee amount, serious delays may occur. You may also receive a \$20.00 fee for any checks returned to us by our bank.



General Information and Instructions for Completing Application Packet

General Information for Completing Application Packet

All applicants must meet ALL requirements regarding experience, education/training, and supervised practical training at the time of initial application. No one will be allowed to complete these requirements during the application process. All applicants have one year from the time of applying to complete the Certification process.

All materials submitted to IRBO as part of the application (and throughout the Certification process) are considered to be the property of IRBO. Said materials include (but are not limited to) the application portfolio, any evaluations, any supporting documentation (such as certificates of attendance and transcripts), and test results. The applicant waives all rights to the application (or any part thereof) once it has been submitted. The applicant may not request return of the application or any part thereof, even if the application has been declined.

Please type or clearly print except where the application states that signatures are required.

Do not use binders, report covers, etc., to organize your application. However, you may use a single paper clip if needed.

If any Supervisor Evaluation Forms are sent with the application by the applicant, they will not be considered. All Supervisory Evaluation Forms must be sent to IRBO by the supervisor.

Application Packet

A. Front Cover

Print your name on the indicated line. Please do not write anything in the area designated as "For Office Use Only."

B. Pages 2 & 3 Applicant Information

All information on these pages is mandatory unless indicated. Do not omit area codes or zip codes in phone numbers and addresses.

If you circle "yes" under special accommodations, you will receive an Examinee Request for Reasonable Accommodations Form. You have 90 days prior to the exam to return the form to the IRBO.

C. Page 4 Authorization and Release Form

Carefully read through this form. Your application will not be considered if this form is not signed, dated, and witnessed.



D. Pages 5 & 6 Professional Code of Ethics/Conduct

The application will not be processed unless this form is complete with printed name, signature, and date in both places at the bottom of the page.

E. Pages 7 & 8 Work Experience

This part of the application pertains to your work history in the field of alcohol and drug use treatment. If the applicant has held more than one job title within a given organization, list each job title as an individual position. Begin by listing the most recent position first. If you require additional blank entry space, you may copy page seven of the application.

You must list the number of years and months in full-time and part-time experience in direct alcohol and other drug abuse counseling to complete the application. An official agency job description must be included for each separate position listed. The job description must be signed and dated by the applicant and the applicant's clinical supervisor.

F. Pages 9 & 10 Education Resume

In the spaces provided on pages eight and nine of the application, list each separate course, workshop, and other formal training you are submitting to satisfy the education requirement. If you require additional blank space, you may copy page nine of the application.

Please note that you must provide Certificates of Attendance with documentation of training hours for workshops, seminars, conferences, etc., to complete the application. Each Certificate of Attendance must have the applicant's name officially recorded on it by an agent of the sponsoring agency. If the Certificate of Attendance has no name recorded on it, or if the name is hand-printed, it will not be accepted.

Applicants must provide an official transcript for college courses. Additionally, in this section, do not include Supervised Practical Training, (i.e., Internships, Practicum). A separate form has been provided for those listings.

G. Page 11 Supervision

Document time spent in supervision, not time spent performing the function. If Supervision was completed under more than one supervisor or at more than one agency, you may make copies of these pages to give to all clinical supervisors.

Basic Education Documentation

All applicants are required to provide a copy of either their High School Diploma or their GED with their application. If an applicant has continued education, an official transcript from an accredited college or university may be submitted in lieu of the High School Diploma or GED.



Clinical Supervisor Evaluation Form

More than one supervisor may be required to complete an evaluation form to fully document all work experience. In this situation, you must copy the form while blank and provide it to each supervisor. All supervisors who complete the form must have been in direct clinical supervision to the applicant for a minimum of six months.

Before providing the evaluation form to the supervisor, the applicant must complete the information requested on the front cover and place your signature in all places where required. Applicants must also advise the Supervisor of any deadline date by which the evaluation form must be postmarked. The form must be returned to the Certification Office directly by the supervisor. It must be postmarked no later than the application deadline date.

Under no circumstances is the applicant allowed to complete any portion of the Clinical Supervisor Evaluation Form. This will result in an automatic denial of the application and could constitute an ethical violation that may jeopardize any future application. The supervisor must complete the entire evaluation form.

Please remember to enclose your Review Fee of \$150.00. Your application will not be complete without this payment.



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Recertification Policy

The Procedure to Apply

While the International Reciprocity Board of Therapeutic Professionals (IRBO) will regularly distribute all Recertification materials, it is the counselor's responsibility to complete the Recertification application in a timely manner. However, this reminder may not occur if we are not informed of all address and employment changes.

To apply for Recertification, you must include the following:

- 1.) Completion of the "Recertification Filing Form." Only IRBO filing forms may be used (no other forms or format acceptable). This form must be signed and dated and must be included with the Recertification documentation.
2. Submission of at least 40 CEUs (These credits must be earned during the 2-year certification period). The CEUs must be properly documented, non-repetitive continuing education, training, or academic work, specific to the following areas: 1) Alcohol & Other Drugs, 2) Other Addictions, 3) Counseling Techniques/Theory, and 4) Behavioral Sciences.
- 3.) Submission of the Recertification fee and any late penalty fees (if applicable).
- 4.) Submission of the Certificate Form. This form must be completed to properly facilitate the printing of a renewal certificate.

Late-Filing Policy

Certifications are considered lapsed if the application for Recertification has not been postmarked by the expiration date. The following is the Recertification policy with regard to late filing:

- 1.) The 40 hours of continuing education/training must have been completed within the designated two-year Certification period. All documentation must be provided and only proper and appropriate documentation will be accepted.
- 2.) The \$150.00 Recertification fee must be submitted.
- 3.) All late-filing fees must also be submitted. Please note that the late fee is assessed at \$10.00 per month for each month (or any portion of a month) beyond the expiration date up to 48 months.

No Recertification submitted beyond the 48-month duration will be considered. The applicant would have no other recourse but to begin the Certification process. Please note that no exceptions will be made.

Application for Recertification Extension

Applications for Recertification extension should be obtained from the Certification Office and must be submitted on or before the date of expiration of the current Recertification period. Please note the following extension fees are included:

- A \$50.00 non-refundable extension fee is charged for extensions due to medical reasons.
- A \$50.00 non-refundable application fee is charged for all other extensions.

The extension fee must accompany the extension application. All individuals will also be required: 1) list and document all CEUs accrued to date; 2) provide a reason, in writing, for requesting an extension; and 3) include supportive documentation for any medical situation described.

Continuing Education

As stated above, a Certified Counselor must obtain 40 clock hours of continuing education credit during the two-year Certification period to qualify for Recertification. The number of training hours obtained from one trainer that a counselor can submit for Recertification is limited to twenty hours. This does not apply to courses for academic credit or to recognized academic institutes/training organizations since there are already multiple instructors.

The required 40 clock hours may be obtained in the following categories:

Category A - Courses, Workshops, Seminars

A minimum of 20 clock hours must be obtained in Category A. The remaining 20 clock hours may be obtained in any combination of categories. If desired, all 40 hours may be obtained in Category A. Category A clock hours must be obtained through pertinent academic courses, workshops and/or seminars in the areas specified above and should not be confused with any of the following categories.

Category B - In-Service Training

A maximum of 14 clock hours may be submitted in this category. IRBO defines in-service training as training limited to the staff within a facility or agency and conducted by a staff member. If the agency contracts with an outside trainer/consultant, the training hours can be considered under Category A. The definition as stated excludes general staff meetings, case conferences or presentations, peer supervision or staff rounds as examples of in-service training. On-the-job Training is not the same as in-service and is not acceptable under any circumstances. All in-service hours must be approved by IRBO and must be specific to the Alcohol/Drug (and other Addictions) Counseling field.

Each Certificate of Attendance for the in-service training should contain the following information:

- Title/topic of training
- Location of training
- Name of instructor(s)
- Date of each separate training
- Number of training hours involved. If more than three hours in length, a scheduling agenda must be furnished.

Category C - Teaching and/or Training

A maximum of 10 clock hours may be obtained in this category. The number of hours awarded to the Teacher/ Trainer will be equal to the number of hours spent in actual teaching/training time. Please note the following:

All training must conform to the eligibility requirements for Certification and/or Recertification, and any teaching/training is only admissible once for credit.

Patient/client lectures and general public education lectures are not admissible for Recertification credit.

Category D - CPR, First Aid, or EMT Trainings

A maximum of 4 clock hours may be obtained in this category.

Category E - Professional Growth

A maximum of 10 clock hours may be obtained in this category. It shall include Management and Health & Administrative trainings.

Category F - Distance Learning

CEUs for "Distance Learning" courses (i.e., home study courses, on-line courses, etc.) are limited to 20 hours per each recertification period. The subject matter must be specific to addictions and/or counseling and must receive prior acceptance from IRBO.

Category G - Special Situations

Certified Counselors may petition the Certification Board for official recognition of other valid types of educational and training experiences not included in the previously listed categories.

Petitions must include the following:

- Descriptions of the program (one page)
- Objectives and purpose
- Length of program - scheduling agenda
- Name and credentials of instructor(s)
- Sponsors, location

Appropriate Documentation

All applicants must provide documentation for workshops, conferences, etc.. If documentation is not given, credit will not be received. The participant's name must be officially recorded on the certificate by the sponsoring agency. If the applicant affixes his/her own name to any certificate, either by hand or by typing, the certificate will not be accepted. Only an authorized agent of the sponsor of the training may fill in the participant's name by hand. The certificate must also include the offering title, specific dates attended, the location of the training, and the number of approved training hours. Applicants cannot provide brochures, registration forms, canceled checks, sign-in sheets, etc., as proper documentation.

Non-Approved Trainings

IRBO is under no obligation to accept CEUs for any training or workshop that has not been pre-approved by us. IRBO will accept trainings that have been approved by another IC&RC certifying body as long as the training meets our Recertification criteria. In submitting CEUs for trainings/workshops that have not been officially approved by IRBO, the following information must be provided in order to be considered for Recertification:

- Proper documentation of attendance
- Training description
- Name and credentials of instructor(s)
- Date(s) and location of training
- Sponsor(s) of training
- Training agenda, complete with beginning and ending times for each training segment

Continuing education hours exclude non-program time such as registration, coffee breaks, meals, social hours, etc.



Guidelines for Continuing Education Credit

An applicant may be asked to provide an official course description for all academic courses that are being submitted for consideration. Academic credit awarded for "prior learning experience," courses certified by use of a challenge examination, courses for audit, courses of independent study, or internships will not be considered as a qualifying educational experience for purposes of Recertification.

In addition, credit will not be allowed for submission of term and/or research papers.

IRBO allows 15 hours per academic credit (that is, 45 hours per 3-credit course) for academic courses. The minimum acceptable unit of credit for any single training experience is one clock hour (i.e., one clock hour = 60 minutes). Continuing education hours are not cumulative; therefore, no additional hours accrued during one recertification period can be carried over to the next recertification period.

If a counselor has any question as to the validity/acceptability of any training, he/she should obtain clarification from the Certification Office prior to attending the training.