

# **The Illinois Model For The Certification of Associate Addictions Professionals (CAAP)**



**IAODAPCA Mission:  
To protect the public by providing competency based  
credentialing of Human Service Professionals**

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Illinois Certification Board  
d/b/a IAODAPCA**

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## PREFACE

This document defines the role, purpose, functions, and responsibilities of the Certified Associate Addictions Professional (CAAP) and establishes a fair methodology for evaluation of competency. The credential defines the minimum standards of competency, which are the knowledge and the skills required of the CAAP.

**Competency Based** – This professional, voluntary certification system is competency based. This means that the minimum standards for the CAAP are the knowledge and skill base identified for the profession. The competencies are specific to alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence treatment, thus distinguishing this profession from other behavioral health/human services professions.

**Experience Based** – This certification system recognizes two ways to acquire competencies: paid work experience and/or supervised volunteer experience.

## PURPOSE

- To establish standards and procedures for the voluntary, professional certification of alcohol and other drug treatment support staff.
- To provide a respected credential of professional competency.
- To provide a method for maintaining and updating professional standards.

## RATIONALE

The Illinois Certification Board, Inc. (ICB) endorses the concept that the treatment of alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence is a specialty field requiring performance by competent and professional individuals. The standards for certification are weighted on the side of proven experience and training.

## PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

CAAPs combine a distinct knowledge base with human service skills to deal with the unique attitudes and behaviors associated with the support for treatment of alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence. Knowledge and skill bases may be acquired through a combination of specialized training, education, and supervised (mentored) work experiences.

The Illinois Certification Board, Inc. (ICB) recognizes the disease model of alcoholism/addiction as well as the bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach and other philosophies effective in promoting recovery. It supports ongoing research and technology and remains open to new techniques as they are proven to be workable and effective. ICB is committed to the professional growth of those working in the AODA field and to openness and enthusiasm about new information that allows AODA professionals to become more effective in their work. ICB recognizes the abstinence (from the use of mind-altering drugs unless under medical supervision) model in the treatment of persons who are alcohol or other drug dependent. ICB also recognizes the harm reduction model, specifically methadone maintenance, for those clients for whom this is appropriate.

## INTRODUCTION

CAAPs fill a unique role among health and human service professionals, especially in the alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence field. They work in a variety of settings, using a combination of strategies and recognizing the need to provide quality services to the public. ICB, a voluntary credentialing system, provides certification of Associate Addictions Professionals based on a combination of experience, education and training, supervised practical experience and a written examination.

The credentialing system identifies the functions, responsibilities, knowledge and skill bases required by CAAPs. In creating this system, ICB has utilized resources from other states and other national organizations.

The Illinois Model is the basic document that describes the rationale and competencies of the credentialing process. ICB recognizes that CAAPs are educated in a wide range of areas, utilize many different approaches and techniques, and bring to the field diverse personal and professional experiences. The certification system is designed to accommodate and evaluate these professionals regardless of academic preparation, or professional training and orientation.

## DEFINITION

CAAPs combine a distinct knowledge base with human service skills to deal with the unique attitudes and behaviors associated with the support of treatment of alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence treatment. Knowledge and skill bases may be acquired through a combination of specialized training, education and supervised (mentored) work experiences.

ICB recognizes that professionals in the alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence fields perform different functions at different levels of accountability. To accommodate this diversity, certification is based on a classification system.

The alcohol and other drug abuse certification system certifies minimum competencies for CAAPs.

Strong professional credentialing programs include:

- Objective testing instruments.
- A meaningful code of ethics and a disciplinary review mechanism.
- A continuing education requirement.
- Supervised (mentored) work experience.

All applicants must subscribe to the ICB Code of Ethics and the jurisdiction of ICB in enforcement of the code.

## REQUIREMENTS

### **Work Experience**

Employed in or seeking employment in the alcohol & other drug abuse treatment field.

### **Supervision/Mentoring**

The applicant must be working under or receiving supervision/mentoring of an individual who is credentialed by the Illinois Certification Board (ICB) d/b/a Illinois Certification Board (ICB).

## **Education**

High school or GED

## **Sobriety**

ICB makes an assumption that each applicant has addressed this issue with their employer.

## **Examination**

Applicants have the opportunity to take the written examination prior to approval of their application. The minimum application requirements include the general information forms, a signed, dated, and notarized CAAP Code of Ethical Conduct, payment of the application fee, and a letter stating the applicant wants to take the examination prior to application approval. This information must be received prior to the application deadline. The applicant will receive an examination letter and test code sheet. In order to be scheduled for the examination, the applicant must return the completed test code sheet and payment of the examination fee. Applicants are required to pass the written examination.

The applicant must meet all requirements to obtain the status of CAAP. This includes an approved application, successful completion of the written examination with a passing score, and payment of all appropriate fees.

Retest – Any applicant failing the written examination will be given additional opportunities to retake the examination. ICB will notify the applicant of the next examination date. The applicant must notify ICB in writing of his or her intent to be seated for the examination by completing a test code sheet and paying the appropriate exam fee prior to testing.

***CAAPs must display their certification at their primary work sites. CAAPs are responsible for renewal of their certification.***

## **Minimum Requirements**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Direct Services / Work Experience</b>	<b>Years of Sobriety</b>	<b>Direct Supervision</b>	<b>Written Exam</b>	<b>Upon Certification, Continuing Education</b>
Certified Associate Addictions Professional (CAAP)	Must be employed or volunteer in AODA profession	To be addressed by employer	Supervision/mentoring by a qualified treatment professional	Successful completion of the CAAP exam	28 hours each renewal in AODA education  Plus minimum of 12 hours each renewal in Ethics/Boundaries

## **TRANSITIONING TO ANOTHER LEVEL**

Transition is the term used when describing a movement from one certification level to another. Transition is available to CAAPs who are certified with ICB. Qualifying work experience and training hours are cumulative. Application for transition does not suspend the CAAP's CEU requirement for his/her current level of certification. CAAPs may transition by doing the following:

- Request transition application packet from ICB.

- Pay appropriate transition fee.
- Complete the application packet.
- Return the transition application to ICB for review and approval.

ICB will not review current files to verify an applicant’s experience, training or education when the applicant is applying for a transition. The applicant is responsible for completing the application in order to provide this information. “You have it on file” will not be accepted in lieu of the submitted information and such applications will be considered incomplete.

## FEES

Application Fee.....	\$40.00
Written Examination .....	\$50.00
Transition to Another Classification .....	\$40.00
Biennial Certification Fee (CAAP).....	\$90.00
Extension Fee (per month) (maximum 6 months) .....	\$10.00
Returned Check Fee .....	\$50.00
Written Examination Late Fee.....	\$20.00
Certificate (replacement copy).....	\$25.00

## CERTIFICATION TIME PERIOD

ICB certification encompasses two calendar years commencing on the date of successful completion of the certification process. Two dates (date of issue and expiration) will appear on the certificate along with a registration number.

## HOW TO APPLY

Certification will be granted contingent upon documentation of eligibility, submission of all required application materials, successful completion of the appropriate examination, and payment of all fees. The following outlines the application, review and approval process:

1. Read the entire Illinois Model for Certified Associate Addictions Professionals thoroughly.
2. Fill out all parts of the application. Print legibly or type application.
3. A current job description is required. The job description must be on agency letterhead, dated and signed by the applicant and supervisor and must reflect actual job duties and responsibilities.
4. Attach all required documentation to support employment (i.e., current job description).
5. Sign, date, and obtain a notary signature for the Code of Ethical Conduct.
6. Verify the completeness of the application by using the **Checklist** in this model.
7. When application is complete, send all materials to:

ICB, Inc.  
401 East Sangamon Avenue  
Springfield, IL 62702

**Applications will not be accepted by fax.**

8. Once the application is approved, the applicant will be notified of the next available date for the written examination.
9. Upon passing the written examination, the applicant will be invoiced for your certification fee.
10. Once payment is received the certification will be issued.

## REVIEW OF MATERIALS

Upon receipt, the application and materials will be screened by ICB for completeness and correctness. The results may be one of the following:

- Application Approved – The application meets all application standards and the applicant is now eligible to be scheduled for the written examination.
- Application Pending – Some of the materials need clarification, submission, or resubmission of any part of the application. The applicant will be notified in writing of the problem(s). **Within one year of the application date, corrected materials must be submitted to ICB or the application will be destroyed resulting in reapplication.**
- Application Denied – The certification standards were not met resulting in denial of application.

## APPEAL PROCESS

When an applicant is denied certification, questions the results of the application review, questions examination results, or is subject to an action by ICB that the applicant deems unjustified, the applicant has the right to inquire and appeal. If, after having been provided an explanation or clarification of the action of ICB, and the applicant still thinks that an action taken is unjustified, he or she may appeal. The applicant may appeal the decision within 30 days of receipt of the notice of denial, or any other action deemed unjustified, by sending a certified letter to the Executive Director of ICB.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

This system is accountable to other professionals. The credentials are independent, private, freestanding and self-supporting. The profession determines and maintains its own standards.

## CREDENTIAL RENEWAL

To maintain the high standards of the professional practice and to assure continuing awareness of new knowledge in the field, ICB requires all CAAPs to renew their credential every two years. It is the responsibility of each CAAP to maintain his or her credential. Any failure to act is the responsibility of the CAAP. The CAAP is to notify ICB in writing of any change of address.

ICB will send a notice that the CAAP is due for credential renewal no fewer than 30 days prior to the expiration date. At the time of credential renewal, 40 continuing education units and the credential renewal fee are due. If 45 days have passed from the expiration date without payment of the credential renewal fee and/or submission of continuing education units, the certification shall be terminated. Non-responsiveness to credential renewal notices will result in termination of the CAAP status.

To have the CAAP renewed, an individual must:

- Hold a current and valid CAAP issued by ICB.
- Maintain knowledge of the discipline through 40 continuing education units (CEUs) received within the two-year credential renewal period, as well as pay the biennial fee. Of these 40 hours, 28 hours must be in education specific to alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence as related to the CAAP domains; the other 12 hours must be in ethics and/or professional boundaries.
- Submit documentation on the required continuing education form provided by ICB with notice of credential renewal and attach certificates of attendance, transcripts, or other proof of attendance.



If more time is needed, extensions may be requested. The CAAP may request up to six, 30-day extensions. Extensions must be requested in writing, detailing the specific reasons for the request. To request an extension a CAAP must include the **biennial fee plus \$10.00 per month**. Extensions will not be granted beyond six months. If at the end of six months of extensions the CAAP has not met the requirements for credential renewal, the certification will be terminated.

## **TERMINATED CERTIFICATION**

Certification will be terminated for:

- Failure to apply for an extension prior to the expiration date.
- Failure to comply with the conditions of an extension by the deadline.
- Failure to document 40 continuing education units (CEUs) over the two-year period of certification and no request for extension.
- Ethics violations.
- Failure to pay the Biennial Fee.

ICB will give CAAPs written notice at least 30 days before the certification expires.

## **WRITTEN EXAM**

### **Exam Development**

The development of a valid exam for the certification process begins with a clear and concise definition of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for competent job performance. Using interviews, surveys, observation, and group discussions, ICB works with experts in the field of alcohol and drug abuse to delineate critical job components. The knowledge and skill bases for the questions in the examination are derived from the actual practice of addiction technicians.

### **Exam Dates**

The Written Examination dates are posted on our web page at [www.ICB.org](http://www.ICB.org). An applicant must complete a test code sheet and pay the appropriate examination fee each time you are scheduled for an examination. An applicant will not be scheduled for the examination without the test code sheet and payment.

Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in examination administration must request specific procedure changes in writing to ICB no fewer than sixty days prior to the scheduled examination date. With the written request, official documentation of the disability or religious issue must be provided. ICB will offer appropriate modifications to its procedures when documentation supports the need for them. If you are unable to provide ICB proper notice, modifications will not be available.

### **Written Examination Eligibility**

Examination results are Pass/Fail. ICB will notify applicants of test results within 90 days. Applicants who do not pass the written exam for certification may apply for reexamination as many times as needed to achieve a passing score. A fee will be assessed each time.

An applicant's file will be closed if the applicant does not retake the test within one year of obtaining a failing score. In such cases, the applicant will be required to start the application process from the beginning to reapply.

## **Associate Addictions Professional Domains**

Seven performance domains for the CAAP were identified. Following is a brief outline of those domains and the tasks, which fall under each domain.

### **Clinical Evaluation – Screening**

- Assist in gathering of data from the client and other available collateral sources to facilitate client care by using screening instruments and other methods that are sensitive to age, developmental level, culture and gender.
- Observe client for signs of psychoactive substance toxicity, intoxication and withdrawal, aggression or danger to others, potential for self-inflicted harm or suicide and coexisting mental health problems.
- Assist in engaging the client into treatment.

### **Referral**

- Maintain relationships with service agencies and other community resources to facilitate the client's utilization of available support systems.
- Support clinical staff in arranging referrals to other professionals, agencies, community programs or other appropriate resources to meet client needs.
- Educate the client about the referral process to increase the likelihood of client understanding and follow through.

### **Service Coordination – Orientation to Treatment**

- Complete necessary procedures for admission to treatment.
- Describe and reinforce accurate treatment and recovery expectations to the client and involved significant others including, but not limited to, nature of services, program goals, program procedures, rules regarding client conduct, schedule of treatment activities and client rights and responsibilities.

### **Ongoing Clinical Support**

- Maintain a helping relationship with the client characterized by warmth, respect, genuineness, concreteness and empathy.
- Support the client's engagement in the treatment and recovery process.
- Facilitate the development of basic and life skills associated with treatment and recovery.
- Respond appropriately when client's behavior is inconsistent with stated treatment goals.
- Apply crisis management skills.
- Support client knowledge, skills and attitudes that contribute to treatment progress and prevent relapse.

- Assist in clarifying and providing information concerning the treatment plan to clients and significant others as needed.
- Aid in coordinating treatment activities and community resources.

### **Clinical and Family Education**

- Provide relevant education to raise awareness and support substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery.
- Understand and describe the health and behavior problems related to substance use, including transmission and prevention of HIV/AIDS, TB, STDs and other infectious diseases.
- Teach life skills, including but not limited to, stress management, relaxation, communication, assertiveness and refusal skills.

### **Documentation**

- Record client activities in relation to treatment goals and objectives using accepted principles of documentation.
- Protect client rights to privacy and confidentiality in the preparation and handling of records, especially in relation to the communication of client information with third parties.

### **Professional and Ethical Responsibility**

- Participate in ongoing supervision and consultation.
- Adhere to established professional codes of ethics in order to maintain professional standards and safeguard the client.
- Adhere to all applicable laws and regulations regarding the treatment of substance use disorders.
- Adapt and modify personal behavior appropriately in response to individual differences that influence client behavior.

## **DISCIPLINARY REVIEW PROCESS**

CAAPs hold a unique position of trust and responsibility and must be aware at all times of the ethical requirements imposed on them as a result of this special position.

ICB has established a “disciplinary review process” which provides an avenue through which complaints can be filed about ethical conduct of CAAPs or an applicant of the ICB certification system.

If it is suspected that a breach of the code of ethics has occurred, it is suggested that this be brought to the CAAP’s attention first. If this does not result in a satisfactory outcome, the CAAP’s supervisor should be informed. If this action still does not result in a satisfactory outcome, an ethics complaint should be made to ICB. For a copy of this formal process, contact ICB directly.

## **INACTIVE STATUS**

ICB established an Inactive Status to allow Certified Associate Addictions Professionals (CAAPs), who are experiencing extenuating circumstances, a means to prevent their certification from expiring. It has been established for CAAPs who expect to be inactive for more than two years. This category allows CAAPs to avoid the full reapplication process.

### **Eligibility Requirements for Inactive Status:**

- Certified and in good standing, i.e., current with fees and continuing education units
- Moving to another state but remaining active in the AODA field
- Retired
- Pursuing academic coursework and not active in AODA work for the duration of such course work
- On extended military active duty
- Having health problems
- Having extenuating personal reasons
- Leaving the AODA field and choosing not to maintain certification via CEUs

**Insufficient hours of continuing education will not be accepted as a rationale for requesting inactive status.**

### **Procedure for Obtaining Inactive Status:**

- Request inactive status, in writing from ICB, stating the specific reason(s) for requesting inactive status.
- Provide documentation for eligibility with the written request.
- CAAPs will surrender their current original CAAP certificate to ICB. CAAPs will receive a letter acknowledging their certification is on inactive status.
- Pay a \$20.00 biennial fee.

During the period of inactive status, CAAPs are considered to be without ICB certification. Such CAAPs cannot refer to themselves, in writing or verbally, as Certified Associate Addictions Professionals.

### **Procedure for Reinstating a Certificate from Inactive Status:**

#### **CAAPs who have left the state and continued in the AODA field must:**

- Submit a written request for reinstatement to ICB.
- Document fulfillment of requirements for certification under the laws/rules of the jurisdiction where the work experience occurred.
- Submit payment of certification fees.

#### **CAAPs who have left the AODA field but wish to reinstate their certification before two years have lapsed must:**

- Submit a written request for reinstatement to ICB.
- Submit payment of certification fees.
- Submit payment of reapplication fee.
- Provide documentation of current AODA employment.
- Provide documentation of current CEU experience.

#### **CAAPs who wish to reinstate their certification and have been on inactive status for more than two years must:**

- Submit a written request for reinstatement to ICB.
- Submit payment of certification fees.
- Submit payment of reapplication fee.
- Submit payment of written examination fee.
- Successfully complete the written examination required for certification.
- Submit current job description. This must be on agency letterhead, signed and dated by CAAPs and their current supervisors and include the amount of time spent in AODA direct service.

## CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE

### **Continuing Education**

The purpose of continuing education is to promote ongoing professional development. It benefits the individual, group, organization and community to whom services are provided. Continuing education is a means of accumulating the training necessary to transition to another certification classification. CAAPs will build upon their previously demonstrated competencies and demonstrate their professional development through pursuit of continuing education.

CAAPs are required to pay a biennial certification fee and submit continuing education units (CEUs). They will be notified that their certification is about to expire no fewer than 30 days prior to the expiration date. They will submit their biennial certification fee and CEUs to ICB by their expiration date. Forms for the documentation of CEUs will accompany the notification and must be completed, signed and submitted with proof of attendance. CEUs should not be submitted until notification of expiration.

### **Continuing Education Policy**

Forty (40) continuing education units (CEUs) are required to maintain certification and must be earned within the two-year certification period. An average of 20 CEUs should be obtained each year. CEUs are not transferable to any other certification period. CEUs obtained prior to the CAAP's initial date of certification are not eligible for maintaining certification. A CAAP may receive CEU credit only once for a training event, even if it is repeated during different certification periods. A CEU is equivalent to one clock hour. (Excluded is non-program time such as breaks, social hours, registration time, meal times). One college semester hour of credit is equivalent to 15 CEUs, one college trimester hour of credit is equivalent to 12 CEUs, and one college quarter hour of credit is equivalent to 10 CEUs.

All 40 CEUs required to maintain certification **must** be recognized or petitioned for ICB CEUs. Continuing education is broken down into two categories. Some continuing education may be recognized by ICB for both categories.

**CATEGORY I:** Minimum 28 CEUs of education specific to alcohol and other drug abuse/dependence as related to the following CAAP performance domains.

Performance Domains – Clinical Evaluation/Screening, Referral, Service coordination/Orientation to Treatment, Ongoing Clinical Support, Clinical and Family Education, Documentation

**CATEGORY II:** Minimum 12 CEUs of education specific to ethics and professional boundaries.

Performance Domain – Professional and Ethical Responsibility

### **Sources of Continuing Education Units**

Recognized programs are training/education programs ICB has identified as fulfilling the criteria for CEU credit and have been awarded CEUs by ICB or are pre-recognized sources. The certificate of completion will contain the program number assigned by ICB, the number of CEUs and the category.

Structured individual continuing education, such as the ICB Bibliocredit Reading Program and other self-study programs, is available to CAAPs with a maximum of 10 CEUs every two (2) years.

CAAPs may receive up to 10 Category II CEUs every two years for volunteer time serving as a member of the Board of Directors, a member of a Board committee, or a member of another ICB committee.

Additional sources of CEUs include any ICB pre-approved program in the seven performance domains and any continuing education in the performance of the CAAP domains provided by the CAAP's employer.

### **Agency In-Service Education and Training Programs**

Agency in-service training programs may be counted for all the required CEUs needed for recertification.

- The training must be in the seven performance domains to include ethics and professional boundaries.
- The training must be documented on agency letterhead with a qualified supervisor's signature.
- In-services not awarded CEU recognition by ICB may be petitioned for CEUs.

### **Validation of Continuing Education**

CAAPs must document they have obtained CEUs and submit the appropriate validation for each educational experience.

- Certificates or other proof of completion for ICB recognized or petitioned trainings
- Transcripts or other official grade reports for college or university courses

### **Procedures to Petition for CEUs**

Not all educational experiences available to the CAAP will have been awarded CEUs by ICB, requiring the CAAP to petition such education/training for CEU credit. Requests are to be submitted to ICB on the petition form with the following information:

- Documentation of attendance
- Goals and objectives of the program
- Date/length of program in clock hours
- Brochure describing program content
- Sponsor, location, instructor and target population
- Definition of the training type (publication, workshop, seminar)
- Identification of the AODA specific content and/or performance domains
- Non-refundable petition fee

Requests will be reviewed within 30 days, and the CAAP will be notified of the results. If recognized, the CAAP will be informed of the number of CEUs awarded.

### **Extension of Continuing Education Requirements**

A CAAP unable to meet the continuing education requirements for recertification may request an extension, in writing. Extensions are \$10.00 per month for up to six months from the CAAP's expiration date. A CAAP not meeting the CEU requirement after the six-month extension shall not be permitted to place his or her certificate on inactive status and shall be terminated. Reinstatement shall be through completion of the full certification requirement.

**NOTE:** The CAAP should remember that this process leaves only 18 months to obtain CEU credit for the current recertification period.

### **Inactive Status**

A CAAP, in good standing, unable to meet the continuing education requirements for recertification due to health or extenuating personal circumstances, may place his or her certificate on inactive status. The process for reactivation from inactive status will then be followed when the CAAP wishes to activate his/her certification.