

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



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

**Illinois Certification Board, Inc.
401 East Sangamon Avenue
Springfield, IL 62702
217-698-8110**

Website: www.iaodapca.org Email: info@iaodapca.org

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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

Level	Direct Services / Work Experience	Years of Sobriety	Direct Supervision	Written Exam	Upon Certification, Continuing Education
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:

- Pay appropriate transition fee.
- Complete online application through Certemy.

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	\$100.00
Extension Fee (one month)	\$50.00
Returned Check Fee	\$75.00

HOW TO APPLY

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

1. Read the entire Illinois Model thoroughly.
2. A valid email address is required to apply. All correspondence regarding the application will be sent to the email address provided.
3. Use the provided link to begin the application process through Certemy.
4. The application process will flow in phases. Once you complete each phase you will move on to the next. There are four phases in total.
5. Upload all required documentation to support employment and education (i.e., current job description, official transcripts, copies of training certificates, letters of attendance/participation) when requested.
6. A current job description is required. Job descriptions must be on agency letterhead, dated and signed by the applicant and supervisor and must reflect the applicant's actual counseling duties and responsibilities.
7. Sign, date and notarize the Counselor's Code of Ethics.
8. After the application is approved, the applicant has paid the exam fee and passed the exam, the applicant will be issued an invoice for the initial certification fee. Once the fee is paid and the applicant receives the certificate, they will be officially certified and will be required to renew the certification in two years.
9. Applicants have one year to complete the application process. The year time limit starts when ICB receives your application and fee.
10. Certificates are issued electronically and will be in the individuals' digital wallet (in their Certemy account).

Review of Materials

Upon receipt, the application and materials will be screened by ICB for completeness and correctness. This process can take up to 30 days. The results may be one of the following:

Phase Approved – The applicant has met the requirement for the current phase, and the applicant will be moved on to the next phase.

Phase Rejected – Some materials need clarification, submission or resubmission. The applicant will be notified through their Certemy account of what is needed.

Within one year of the application date, corrected materials must be submitted or the applicant will need to restart the application process.

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.

Examination

The examination is computer based and scheduled by appointment only. Testing candidates will need to have a current email account in order to set the exam appointment. Walk-in examinations are not allowed.

Once the application has been processed, the applicant will receive an examination letter and pre-registration test code sheet via email. To be scheduled for the examination, the applicant must return a completed pre-registration test code sheet with payment of the non-refundable examination fee.

The Illinois Certification Board (ICB) utilizes a separate testing company to administer this exam. Upon ICB's receipt of this pre-registration form, and appropriate exam fee, your eligibility information will be forwarded to our testing administrators. You will then receive an email directly from our testing administrators allowing you to set your exam appointment. The email will contain complete instructions on how to choose your exam date, time and location.

Individuals with disabilities and/or religious obligations that require modifications in examination administration must submit a written request for specific procedural changes to ICB no less than thirty days prior to the examination date. Official documentation of the disability or religious issue must be provided with the written request. With supportive documentation and proper notice for request, ICB will offer appropriate modifications.

The development of a valid examination for the certification process begins with a clear and concise definition of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for competent job performance. The test is based on what the alcohol and drug counselor does in practice. The knowledge and skill bases for the questions in the examination are derived from the actual practice of the counselor in alcohol and other drug counseling. Multiple sources were utilized in the development of questions for the examination. The examinations are comprised of multiple-choice questions, and each question is linked to the performance domains as well as the knowledge and skills identified for each domain. Applicants are allowed two hours (2) to complete the examination.

Official examination results are distributed upon immediate completion of the exam. ICB will email the individual within 10-14 business days with official instructions of the next steps in the certification process. Applicants failing the examination will be given opportunities to retest providing the application is in good standing. Applicants must notify ICB of their intent to be seated for that examination by completing a test code sheet and paying the appropriate examination fee. Applicants are required to pay the exam fee each time they take the exam.

An applicant's file will be closed if the applicant does not retest within one year of obtaining a failing score or fails to complete the application within one year from the date in which the applicant first applied. In such a case, the applicant will be required to submit a new application and fees.

A comprehensive study guide is available for the CAAP exam. The study guide is a tool to review the basic information required for the knowledge base covered on the examination. You may contact the ICB office to purchase the study guide.

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.

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.

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 \$30.00 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.

Certified Associate Addictions Professionals will follow the guidelines set forth in the Illinois Model for Certified Associate Addictions Professionals. They are required to pay a biennial certification fee of \$100.00 and submit 40 continuing education units (CEUs) on or before the expiration date that is printed on the certificate. A late fee of \$45.00 will be assessed if the certification is not renewed on time.

CAAPs will be notified that their certification is about to expire no fewer than 60 days prior to the expiration date. The renewal notice will come via email. They will submit their biennial certification fee and CEUs to the Illinois Certification Board (ICB) by their expiration date. Fees are to be paid and CEUs are to be uploaded into their online Certemy portal in order for their recertification to be processed by ICB.

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.

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 re-certification may request a one-month extension through their Certemy portal. The one-month extension is \$50.00. To request an extension, CAAPs must include the biennial certification fee plus \$50.00 for the one-month extension. The extension time starts from the certified member's expiration date. Extensions will not be granted beyond one month. Certified professionals who have not met the requirements for recertification by the end of the extension time will have their certification terminated. They will not be permitted to place their certification on inactive status.

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

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.