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# MAINTAINING YOUR CERTIFICATION

## CERTIFIED RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Certified Recovery Support Specialists will follow the guidelines set forth in the Illinois Model for Certified Recovery Support Specialists (CRSS). They are required to pay a biennial certification fee of \$150.00. They will submit 40 continuing education units (CEUs) every two years upon expiration of their certification. A late fee of \$45.00 will be assessed if the certification is not renewed on time.

CRSS professionals 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.

### **A. Continuing Education Policy**

1. **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 CRSS professional's initial date of certification are not eligible for maintaining certification. A CRSS professional 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.
2. All **40 CEUs** required to maintain certification **must** be recognized or petitioned for ICB CEUs.

The CEUs must include the following topic:

- **15 CEUs in Mental Health Recovery and the Role of Peer Support in the Recovery Process**  
At least 15 CEUs of education that are on mental health recovery and peer support in the recovery process information.  
(Examples: advocacy, professional responsibility, mentoring and recovery support)

**The remaining CEUs are to be education specific to knowledge and skills related to the core functions of CRSS professionals. These CEUs do not need to be mental health recovery and peer support specific.**

(Examples: evidence-based practices, leadership skills, communication skills, trauma-informed care, conflict resolution, confidentiality, legal systems, crisis intervention, health and safety, roles/boundaries, relapse prevention, and cultural competency)

CRSS professionals have the option to complete all 40 of their CEUs on mental health recovery and peer support in the recovery process topics.

### **B. Sources of Continuing Education Units**

1. 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 name of the participant, name and date of the program, signature of instructor of sponsor, program number assigned by ICB, and the number of CEUs.
2. Structured individual continuing education, such as home study programs, is available to CRSS professionals with a maximum of 15 CEUs every two years.
3. CRSS professionals may receive up to 12 CEUs every two years for volunteer time serving as a member of a Mental Health Board of Directors or as a member of a Mental Health Board of Directors' committee.
4. Teaching and/or training other mental health, rehabilitation or CODP professionals in CRSS knowledge areas qualifies for up to a maximum of 15 CEUs in a two-year certification period. The number of CEUs awarded will be equal to the number of hours spent in actual training time. Patient education and public education lectures are not eligible. Presentations for which the CRSS professional has previously received credit are also not eligible. Petitions must be submitted for any presentations that have not been awarded ICB CEUs.

5. Research papers accepted for publication, reading or discussion at a professional meeting or conference, and professional publications in the mental health, rehabilitation, or substance use disorder field qualifies for up to a maximum of 15 CEUs in a two-year certification period. The topic must pertain to mental health recovery or CRSS and address one of the recovery support domains. The work can be counted only once, even though presented in more than one format or location. Petitions must be submitted for CEUs.

**C. Agency In-service Education and Training Programs**

Of the 40 CEUs required biennially, 20 CEUs may be agency in-service training programs. Inservices not awarded CEU recognition by ICB may be petitioned for CEUs.

**D. Validation of Continuing Education**

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

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

**E. Procedures to Petition for CEUs**

Not all educational experiences available to CRSS professionals will have been awarded CEUs by ICB, requiring them 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 or other document describing program content
- Sponsor, location, instructor and target population
- Definition of the training type (publication, workshop, seminar)
- Identification of the Mental Health Recovery specific content and/or knowledge/skill related to the Core Functions
- Non-refundable petition fee

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

**F. Extension of Continuing Education Requirements**

CRSS Professionals unable to meet the continuing education requirements for recertification may request a one-month extension through their Certemy portal. The one-month extension fee is \$50.00 To request an extension, the CRSS professional must include the biennial certification fee plus \$50.00 for the one-month extension. The extension time starts from the CRSS professional's expiration date. Extensions will not be granted beyond one month. CRSS 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.

**G. Inactive Status**

CRSS professionals in good standing unable to meet the continuing education requirements for recertification maintenance due to health or extenuating personal reasons may place their certificate on inactive status if they meet the requirements. The process for reactivation from inactive status will then be followed when they wish to activate their certification.

**For detailed information refer to The Illinois Model for Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS).**