



There are many pathways to certification, and no “wrong door” for professionals to enter through. The Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB) has developed the following to outline the general requirements for certification, as well as the requirements to obtain other credentials. PCB offers credentials that help a professional progress along a career ladder. While some professionals may choose to stay at a certain level, progression through the ladder comes with the proper experience, education and examination. Professionals may begin wherever their current experience and education level permit. For more detailed requirements, please review the corresponding application on PCB’s website at www.pacertboard.org. PCB offers several certifications:

- Certified Recovery Specialist (CRS)
- Certified Family Recovery Specialist (CFRS)
- Certified Peer Specialist (CPS)
- Certified Recover Specialist Supervisor (CRSS)
- Certified Allied Addiction Practitioner (CAAP)
- Associate Addiction Counselor (AAC)
- Certified Associate Addiction Counselor (CAAC)
- Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC)
- Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CAADC)
- Certified Clinical Supervisor (CCS)

	CRS	CFRS	CPS	CRSS	CAAP	AAC	CAAC	CADC	CAADC	CCS
Education	78 hours – standardized curriculum	78 hours – standardized curriculum	75 hours	30 hours	50 hours	100 hours	300 hours	300 hours	180 hours	30 hours
Experience	None	Letters of Reference	None	2 years as a CRS, 1 as a supervisor	2 years	1 year	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years
Supervision	None	None	None	25 hours	100 hours	100 hours	300 hours	200 hours	100 hours	200 hours
Exam	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Degree	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED	N/A	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED	High School Diploma/GED	Bachelors	Masters	Masters or Prerequisite certification

Below are a few scenarios that many currently certified professionals have used to successfully move through the career ladder. NOTE: in most cases, professionals can hold multiple certifications if they choose to do so. Education used to complete a previously issued certification(s) through PCB can be applied toward the education required for other certifications through PCB.

CRS to CAAC

If a current CRS wants to move to a counseling certification, most often they will be eligible for the CAAC. The CAAC meets the states' staffing qualifications for the position of an addiction counselor. If the CRS hold a Bachelor's degree, they are encouraged to apply for the CADC. The following documentation would be needed for a CRS to obtain the CAAC:

Education: 246 or 222* hours of education, of which 46 hours are alcohol and drug specific *hours are dependent upon when the applicant received their CRS.

Supervision: 300 hours

Experience: 3 years as an alcohol and drug counselor

Examination: Pass the IC&RC Examination for Alcohol and Drug Counselors

CRS to CAAP

If a current CRS moves in to a position providing direct alcohol and drug abuse auxiliary services such as intake, assessment, detox, etc., they may become eligible to obtain the CAAP. The following documentation would be needed for a CRS to obtain the CAAP:

Education: None required, though it is helpful for professionals to have a background and education in Clinical Competence and Systems Integration

Supervision: 100 hours

Experience: 2 years in a position providing direct alcohol and drug auxiliary services

Examination: Pass the Examination for Certified Allied Addiction Practitioners

CAAC to CADC

If a current CAAC completes a Bachelor's degree, they may choose to upgrade their certification to the CADC. The professional only needs to submit a request in writing, with the discounted application fee, and official transcripts. Transcripts must be sent to the PCB Office directly from the college or university. The examination used for the CAAC and CADC is the same; therefore, no examination is required to upgrade the CAAC to the CADC.

PCB is available to review education, job descriptions or other documents to help facilitate the certification process. While this document provides general standards, our certifications require other official documentation to be submitted at the time of application. Therefore, it is important to review the application for the certification you wish to apply for in its entirety.

Common Job Titles of Professionals Seeking Certification

Professionals seeking certification hold many job titles. This is not intended to be a full list of what is accepted, but rather a guide to what job titles fall under a specific certification. If you have questions regarding job title, or responsibilities you should contact PCB.

CRS

House Manager
Recovery Coach
Recovery Navigator
Recovery Specialist
Program Aide

CAAP

Intake Specialist/Coordinator
Admissions Specialist/Coordinator
Assessment Specialist/Coordinator
Behavioral Health Technician
Detox Nurse/RN/LPN

COUNSELOR CERTIFICATIONS*

Counselor Assistant
Junior Counselor
Counselor
Addiction Therapist
Clinical Supervisor

*Counselor Certifications include: AAC, CAAC, CADC, and CAADC

Benefits of Certification

- **Certification identifies professionals who are specialists in the field**, setting them apart from others not certified.
- **Certified professionals are recognized in state and national insurance legislation**, Federal Department of Transportation regulations, Pennsylvania Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) requirements and the Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) staffing requirements.
- **Certification is based on industry standards and evidence-based practices.**
- **Certification is a marketing tool for the professional** when seeking employment or advancement.
- **Certification is a marketing tool for the agency** when promoting their services to the public, the client, potential clients, and payers.
- **Certification provides public protection** and a grievance process for those harmed.

For more information or if you need assistance determining your next steps, please email info@pacertboard.org or call 717.540.4455.