

The International Reciprocity Board of Therapeutic Professionals Counselor Certification



120 West Ocean Drive
Cataño Puerto Rico 00962

AADC Certification Requirements

The following document provides information to receive Alcohol & Drug Counselor Certification – Advanced Level (AADC). Application can be made for the Advanced AADC credential once the requirements have been met. As you work through this document, please notice the Continuing Education Credit Guidelines.

Any clinical supervisor(s) who will be completing the Supervisory Evaluation Form must be made aware that all evaluations are confidential and applicants may not receive a copy of the evaluation form. The completed evaluation form must be mailed directly to IRBO by the supervisor.

Testing Information

All applicants must pass the IC&RC International Examination for Advanced Alcohol & Drug Counselors (AADC). 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 site 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. Exam scores can be emailed to applicants. 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 AADC 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 and will be kept on file until the next available testing period.
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. Any applicant who feels they have the basis for a meritorious complaint should contact the IRBO Certification Office to obtain detailed information regarding the Grievance/Complaint Process.

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 application forms.
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 AADC

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

A. Work Experience

In order for all applicants to meet the work experience requirement, the applicant must document 2,000 hours (equal to 1 year of full-time work) providing the full range of counseling services under direct clinical supervision to clients with a diagnosis of alcohol and/or other drug use. Supervised work experience must be in the IC&RC four AADC domains (see domains under Supervision). The Counselor must carry the client case load. A minimum of six months of total experience must be acquired in one facility, under one supervisor.

Work experience that is not clinically supervised is not admissible. All work experience must be documented and supported by an agency job description.

Please note that supervised work experience is defined as experience in which the counselor receives clinical supervision. Clinical supervision is defined as a specific aspect of staff development dealing with the clinical skills and competencies for persons providing counseling. The format for supervision is commonly one-to-one and/or small groups on a regular basis. Methods for review will often include case review and discussion, utilizing direct observation of a counselor's clinical work.

B. Education

To meet the education requirement, the applicant must have a Master's degree (or higher) in a Human Services Behavioral Sciences field with a clinical application (example is counseling practicum) from a regionally-accredited college or university within the United States or college and university outside of the United States that are deemed equivalent by the IRBO. Documentation must be submitted in the form of an official transcript.

C. Training

The training requirement is documentation of 180 clock hours of Alcohol/Drug Counselor-specific continuing education. Six hours must be specific to counselor ethics. Applicants must sign the Code of Ethics.



Practicums/Internships are not considered in meeting the training requirement. The alcohol/drug-specific education and the ethics training must have been completed within the ten (10) years immediately preceding application. A C grade (or higher) is required for any academic course.

Continuing education/training is defined as formal classroom education — for example, college or university courses, workshops, seminars, and institutes. All training done in fulfillment of the requirement for certification must be verified with acceptable documentation. See Continuing Education Credit Guidelines for specific criteria regarding documentation of continuing education/training.

Do not submit Certificates of Attendance that are handed out blank to be filled in by the attendee. The attendee's name must be recorded officially on the certificate by the sponsoring agency. If the attendee's name is filled in by hand by an agent of the sponsoring agency at the time of the training, that agent's name and the date must be printed next to the attendee's name in parentheses.

D. Supervision

All applicants must provide documentation of receiving at least 300 clock hours 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 and Education
- 4.) Professional and Ethical Responsibilities.

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

E. International AADC Examination

The applicant must pass the International Certification and Reciprocity Consortiums Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC) Examination. More specific information will be provided to the applicant as s/he continues with the Certification process.



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AADC Application Instruction

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

As you complete the following pages, please take 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 International Certification and Reciprocity Consortiums Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC) Examination.

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 top of the page.

E. Pages 7 & 8 Work Experience

This part of the application pertains to your work history in the field of substance use disorder 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 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

Remember to include an official transcript documenting a Master's (or higher) degree in a Human Services Behavioral Sciences field with a counseling practicum from a regionally-accredited college or university.

In the spaces provided, list each separate course, workshop, and other formal training which you are submitting to satisfy the education requirement. If you require additional blank space in which to list your training/education, photocopy page 9 (nine).

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.

Additionally, in this section, do not include Supervised Practical Training, (i.e., Internships, Practicum). However, this information may be considered under the experience section.

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.

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 provided 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 to: 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 Substance Use Disorder 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 Substance Use Disorder 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 member board 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.

