

Counselor Certification Requirements

The Iowa Board of Certification is a certifying body representative of individuals and organizations dedicated to the provision of quality service and the enhancement of health in Iowa.

The certification process responds to the needs of the addiction fields by promoting and developing the professionalism, competency and integrity of treatment and prevention professionals.

Three levels of certification are awarded to qualified applicants:

Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC)

Advanced Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor- non reciprocal (ACADC-NR)

Advanced Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor - reciprocal (ACADC)

Only the ACADC credential is eligible for reciprocity with members of the [International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium](#) (ICRC).

Residency Requirement: The applicant must live and/or work in Iowa at least 51% of the time at the time of application.

GETTING STARTED

Request the Counselor Handbook by completing the “[Request for Application](#)” 📎 form and send it with the \$50.00 application/handbook fee to the IBC office. Or, download the [Counselor Handbook](#) 📎 and mail the form with the \$40.00 application fee to the IBC office.

IBC
3850 Merle Hay Road, Suite 303
Des Moines IA 50310

You will have one year from the date the handbook is issued to complete your application.

FEES

The following is a list of fees incurred during the certification process:

Application/Online Handbook	\$40.00
Application/ Printed Handbook	\$50.00
CPM Oral Interview Fee	\$75.00
Written Test Fee	\$100.00
Certification (for 2 years)	\$200.00
Recertification (2 years)	\$200.00
Dual Certification	\$150.00
Late Recertification Penalty	\$100.00
Inactive Certification Enrollment	\$25.00
Inactive Certification Status (1 year)	\$60.00
Reciprocity (paid to ICRC)	\$100.00
International Certification	\$48.00
Returned Check Fee	\$35.00
Replacement Certificate	\$30.00

REQUIREMENTS

Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC)

1 through 3 required

1. Must satisfy the requirements under the Education Track or the Experience Track. (see below for details)
2. Passing score on the Supervisor's Counselor Evaluation.
3. Successful completion of the ICRC written test.

Education Track

- A. High school diploma or GED. College level credit which must include at least 24 semester hours in substance abuse or its related fields. (Related fields are Counseling, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Human Services, and Criminal Justice). In addition, a minimum of 150 clock hours (Note: One semester hour equals 15 clock hours) of training in the Core Functions is required. These 150 clock hours may be a combination of college courses, trainings, and workshops. Some special conditions apply; namely,

These hours may not include in-service training. An in-service training is the education and training which occurs within the counselor's agency, *only for agency staff and conducted only by agency staff.*

Specifically, clock hours must be earned as:

- 45 clock hours in Counseling Theories & Techniques
 - 45 clock hours in Alcohol and Drug specific education
 - 6 clock hours in Special Populations
 - 6 clock hours in Counseling Ethics
 - The remaining hours may be earned under any of the Core Functions.
- B. 1000 clock hours (6 month full-time) of supervised substance abuse counseling experience within the past three years.

Of the supervised experience, at least 500 clock hours must be documented in performing the Core Functions of the Alcohol and Drug Counselor and 36 of the hours in face-to-face supervision with a qualified supervisor. The following is a list of the minimum hours that must be spent performing each of the Core Functions.

- *Screening:* 15 clock hours
- *Intake:* 20 clock hours
- *Orientation:* 20 clock hours
- *Assessment:* 30 clock hours
- *Treatment Planning:* 50 clock hours
- *Counseling:* 50 clock hours
- *Case Management:* 50 clock hours
- *Crisis Intervention:* 15 clock hours
- *Client Education:* 30 clock hours
- *Referral:* 15 clock hours
- *Reports and Record Keeping:* 30 clock hrs
- *Consultation:* 30 clock hours
- The remaining hours may be performed under any of the Core Functions.

OR

Experience Track

- A. High school diploma or GED. 150 clock hours (Note: One semester hour equals 15 clock hours) of training in the Core Functions. These 150 clock hours may be a combination of college courses, trainings, and workshops. Some special conditions apply; namely,

These hours may not include in-service training. An in-service training is the education and training which occurs within the counselor's agency, *only for agency staff and conducted only by agency staff*

Specifically, clock hours must be earned as:

- 45 clock hours in Counseling Theories & Techniques
- 45 clock hours in Alcohol and Drug specific education
- 6 clock hours in Special Populations
- 6 clock hours in Counseling Ethics
- The remaining hours may be earned under any of the Knowledge and Skill Competencies.

- B. 3000 clock hours (1 ½ years full-time) of supervised substance abuse counseling experience within the past three years.

Of the supervised experience, at least 500 clock hours must be documented in performing the Core Functions of the Alcohol and Drug Counselor and 36 of the hours in face-to-face supervision with a qualified supervisor. The following is a list of the minimum hours that must be spent performing each of the Core Functions.

- *Screening*: 15 clock hours
- *Intake*: 20 clock hours
- *Orientation*: 20 clock hours
- *Assessment*: 30 clock hours
- *Treatment Planning*: 50 clock hours
- *Counseling*: 50 clock hours
- *Case Management*: 50 clock hours
- *Crisis Intervention*: 15 clock hours
- *Client Education*: 30 clock hours
- *Referral*: 15 clock hours
- *Reports and Record Keeping*: 30 clock hrs
- *Consultation*: 30 clock hours
- The remaining hours may be performed under any of the Core Functions.

Advanced Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ACADC & ACADC-NR) 1 through 6 required

1. High school diploma or GED. Completion of 700 clock hours (Note: One semester hour equals 15 clock hours) of education and training in the Core Functions. These 700 clock hours may be a combination of college courses, trainings, and workshops. Some special conditions apply; namely,

- a. At least 30 hours must have been obtained within the 24 months preceding the application.
- b. These hours may not include in-service training. An in-service training is education and training which occurs within the counselor's agency, *only for agency staff and conducted only by agency staff*.
- c. Specifically, clock hours must be earned as:

- 90 clock hours in Counseling Theories & Techniques
- 90 clock hours in Alcohol and Drug specific education
- 6 clock hours in Special Populations
- 6 clock hours in Counseling Ethics

- The remaining hours may be earned under any of the Knowledge and Skill Competencies.
2. 6000 clock hours of supervised substance abuse counseling experience within the past 6 years. (A Bachelor's degree or higher in Substance Abuse, Counseling, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Human Services, or Criminal Justice may take the place of one year of the 3 year experience requirement.) An equivalent of one-third of the experience must be in the area of alcohol counseling, one-third in the area of other drug counseling and the balance in either alcohol or other drug counseling. Internships may be applied to this experience.

Of the supervised experience, at least 500 clock hours must be documented in performing the Core Functions of the Alcohol and Drug Counselor and 36 of the hours in face-to-face supervision with a qualified supervisor. The following is a list of the minimum hours that must be spent performing each of the Core Functions.

- *Screening*: 15 clock hours
 - *Intake*: 20 clock hours
 - *Orientation*: 20 clock hours
 - *Assessment*: 30 clock hours
 - *Treatment Planning*: 50 clock hours
 - *Counseling*: 50 clock hours
 - *Case Management*: 50 clock hours
 - *Crisis Intervention*: 15 clock hours
 - *Client Education*: 30 clock hours
 - *Referral*: 15 clock hours
 - *Reports and Record Keeping*: 30 clock hrs
 - *Consultation*: 30 clock hours
 - The remaining hours may be performed under any of the Core Functions.
3. Passing score on the Supervisor's Counselor Evaluation.
 4. Successful completion of the ICRC written test.

In addition to the above, ACADC applicants who want reciprocity through ICRC must also:

- Submit a case file presentation and complete Forms 07 and 08.
- Pass the oral exam

Qualifications to Supervise

Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors are eligible to conduct supervision, either on site or through contracted services. Applicants must be supervised by a counselor certified at a level equal to or higher than the level for which the applicant is applying.

CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE ALCOHOL AND DRUG COUNSELOR

The tasks which the alcohol and drug counselor performs generally fall into the following Core Functions:

SCREENING - The process by which a client is determined appropriate and eligible for admission to a particular program.

INTAKE - The administrative and initial assessment procedures for admission to a program.

ORIENTATION - Describing to the client the general nature and goals of the program; the rules governing client conduct and infractions that can lead to disciplinary action or discharge from the program; in a non-residential program, the hours during which services are available; treatment costs to be borne by the client, if any; and

client rights.

ASSESSMENT - The procedures by which a counselor/program identifies and evaluates an individual's strengths, weaknesses, problems, and needs for the development of a treatment plan.

TREATMENT PLANNING - The process by which the counselor and the client identify and rank problems needing resolution, establish agreed upon immediate and long-term goals, and decide upon a treatment process and the resources to be utilized.

COUNSELING - (Individual, Group, and Significant Others) The utilization of special skills to assist individuals, families, or groups in achieving objectives through exploration of a problem and its ramifications; examination of attitudes and feelings; consideration of alternative solutions; and decision making.

CASE MANAGEMENT - Activities which bring services, agencies, resources, or people together within a planned framework of action toward the achievement of established goals. It may involve liaison activities and collateral contracts.

CRISIS INTERVENTION - Those services which respond to an alcohol and/or other drug abuser's needs during acute emotional and/or physical distress.

CLIENT EDUCATION - Provision of information to individuals and groups concerning alcohol and other drug abuse and the available services and resources.

REFERRAL - Identifying the needs of the client that cannot be met by the counselor or agency and assisting the client to utilize the support systems and community resources available.

REPORTS AND RECORD KEEPING - Charting the results of the assessment and treatment plan, writing reports, progress notes, discharge summaries, and other client-related data.

CONSULTATION WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS IN REGARD TO CLIENT TREATMENT/SERVICES - Relating with in-house staff or outside professionals to assure comprehensive, quality care for the client.

An alcohol and drug counselor may be expected to perform a number of other activities. While they may be important to the particular agency, they are not, for professional certification purposes, considered an essential part of the alcohol and drug counselor's function.