



*Protecting the Citizens  
of Florida*

**Child  
Welfare**

# Child Welfare Certification Candidate Guide

(CWPI, CWCM, CWLC)

This booklet includes:

1. Easy to follow instructions.
2. Your personal application form.
3. Mandatory forms to collect training documents and recommendations.

## Define Yourself as a Professional through Certification.

# About Us

## Preface

The Florida Certification Board (FCB) is a nationally recognized, non-profit professional credentialing organization that has been operating in Florida for over 30 years. It currently credentials over 15,000 individuals working in the related fields of addictions, prevention, criminal justice, mental health, child welfare and behavioral health.

The FCB adheres to the highest industry psychometric standards for developing, implementing and administering certification programs and examination instruments. Applicants complete a rigorous pre-qualification and examination process; specifically designed to verify the applicant has the necessary education, training and experience to perform the core competencies established for and by the regulated profession. Once certified, each professional is required to strictly observe a Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and participate in annual continuing education events.

The FCB is the only agency offering prevention certification in Florida (Chapter 397, F.S.).

## Mission

The FCB serves the public interest by developing, administering and maintaining certification programs that reflect current standards of competent practice for health and human services professionals. Our mission is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Florida by regulating our certified professionals through experience, education, and compliance with professional and ethical standards.

## Property of the Board

Materials submitted to the FCB as part of the certification process are considered property of the Florida Certification Board. Materials include but are not limited to applications, evaluations, transcripts, and certificates. **Applicants are encouraged to keep copies of all materials and paperwork submitted for certification.** Certification wall certificates and wallet cards are the property of the FCB and must be surrendered upon Board request.

## Board Policy and Procedures

All FCB requirements, policies and procedures, including the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, are maintained on our website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org). In the instance of a discrepancy between this manual and that posted on the website, the website shall take priority. Applicants and certified professionals are individually responsible for ensuring they are following current FCB policy and procedures.

## Candidate Guide Target Audience

The Florida Child Welfare Professional Certification Candidate Guide is written for two audiences:

1. Individuals employed by the Department of Children and Families, any Sheriff's Office or community based care (CBC) provider under Grant Agreement or under contract with the Department of Children and Families to provide child welfare services who are required to hold certification as a condition of employment. These persons must earn and maintain certification in one or more of the following disciplines:
  - Child Protective Investigator (CWPI)
  - Case Manager (CWCM)
  - Licensing Counselor (CWLC)
2. Individuals employed by a training entity and assigned responsibility for assisting eligible employees earn and maintain Florida Child Welfare Professional Certification as a Child Protective Investigator, Case Manager, or Licensing Counselor. A training entity, as defined in 65C-33, F.A.C., is the employing agency which is responsible for the delivery of pre-service and continuing education to a particular circuit, region or geographical area.

Please see the Florida Child Welfare Professional Certification Standards table for specific requirements.

**Individuals not currently employed** by the Department of Children and Families, any Sheriff's Office or community based care (CBC) provider under Grant Agreement or under contract with the Department of Children and Families to provide child welfare services **must not use this candidate guide**. Contact the FCB for guidance regarding child welfare certification for non-employed applicants.

## Publication and Revision History

Date	Version	Reason for Change
3-13-16	1.0	Original Publication. Replaces all prior Child Welfare Certification Candidate Guides and mandatory forms dated prior to 3-13-16.

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# Child Welfare Certification Overview

## FCB's Child Welfare Credentials

The FCB offers Florida Child Welfare Professional Certification in three disciplines:

- Certified Protective Investigator (CWPI)
- Certified Case Manager (CWCM)
- Certified Licensing Counselor (CWLC)

Certification is a requirement of employment pursuant to 402.41, F.S., and 65C-33, F.A.C. The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) has approved the FCB as a third-party credentialing entity for Florida Child Welfare Professional certification programs.

The FCB's Child Welfare certification application process requires action by the applicant, the employer, and the FCB. As the majority of certification applicants are not certified when hired, and the employer has committed to providing training and other certification related supports to their employee, the FCB has designed a certification application process that:

- Supports the training and professional development efforts of employing agencies and training entities; and
- Relies on a partnership between the certification applicant, training entity designated employee(s), and FCB certification specialists.

## Child Welfare Professional Certification Process Overview

The FCB Child Welfare credentials are purposefully earned over an extended period to allow applicants to gain the education, training and experience necessary to earn certification while on-the-job. Earning child welfare certification is a two-part process.

1. Provisional Certification. The Provisional Certification application process results in the award of one of the following credentials:
  - a. CWPI in Provisional status
  - b. CWCM in Provisional status
  - c. CWLC in Provisional status

Provisional Certification is a time-limited, 12-month period that allows applicants to complete on-the-job experience and supervision requirements necessary to earn full certification. The provisional credential is effective on the date the exam is passed and expires 12 months later.

The *Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application*, fee payment and supporting documentation are due to the FCB a minimum of 10 business days<sup>1</sup> before the scheduled certification exam administration date.

2. Full Certification. The Full Certification application process results in the award of one of the following credentials:
  - a. CWPI in Certified status
  - b. CWCM in Certified status
  - c. CWLC in Certified status

Applicants must complete on-the-job supervision competency assessment and work experience requirements. The *Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application*, fee payment<sup>2</sup> and supporting documentation are due to the FCB a minimum of 15 business days before the provisional credential expires.

## Child Welfare Certification Designations

**Provisional Status:** The FCB issues one of three certification designations (CWPI, CWCM, CWLC) in provisional status when the individual has completed all FCB application policy requirements and met training and testing requirements.

Individuals holding a **CWPI, CWCM or CWLC in provisional status** have completed training requirements and have the knowledge base necessary to earn a passing score on the CWPI or CWCM certification exam. While in provisional status, all job/casework assignments are made by the employing agency and should be reflective of the provisionally certified individual's education, training, experience and demonstration of competency. Provisionally certified professionals are expected to work under and actively seek/respond to intensive supervision while gaining the skills necessary to earn full certification.

**Certified Status:** The FCB issues one of three certification designations (CWPI, CWCM, CWLC) in certified status when the individual has completed all FCB application policy requirements and met on-the-job supervision competency assessment and work experience requirements.

Individuals holding a **CWPI credential in certified status** are recognized as an authorized agent of the Department of Children and Families who investigates reports of child abuse, abandonment or neglect. The investigator gathers information and applies sophisticated critical thinking to assess present and impending danger in order to determine if children are safe or unsafe, or at risk of future harm.

Individuals holding a **CWCM credential in certified status** are recognized as having the knowledge and skills necessary to engage families, in the context of their community, culture and networks, to strengthen their capacity to ensure children are safe and thrive. The case manager works with families to identify solutions, develop goals, and link them with appropriate

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<sup>1</sup> Per policy, the Pre-service Training Verification Form may be submitted up to 5 business days after the exam administration.

<sup>2</sup> The CWP Upgrade Application Fee takes effect for applications received July 2, 2016 or later.

services. In the event that children cannot live safely with their parents, the case manager works to find a permanent home and permanent relationships for the children.

Individuals holding a **CWLC credential in certified status** are recognized as having the knowledge and skills necessary to assess prospective persons or agencies to receive, care for and provide homes for children who cannot live safely with their families. Licensing counselors also monitor foster homes, relicense current foster parents, and provide foster parents with supportive services or linkages to services.

## Child Welfare Professional Certification Standards by Discipline

The following tables provide an overview of the minimum requirements to earn the CWPI, CWCM or CWLC credential in provisional status (Table 1) and the requirements to earn and maintain full certification as a CWPI, CWCM or CWLC (Tables 2 and 3).

**Table 1: Provisional Certification Standards**

Requirement	CWPI-Provisional Status Minimum Requirement	CWCM-Provisional Status Minimum Requirement	CWLC-Provisional Status Minimum Requirement
<b>System Registration</b>	Applicants <b>MUST</b> create an account in the FCB’s online certification database during the first week of pre-service training. The training entity’s designee verifies the accounts are created and <b>MUST</b> submit the <i>CW Certification Tracking Form</i> to the FCB no later than the last day of the second week of pre-service training. <b>NO PAYMENTS OR DOCUMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL THE FCB HAS RECEIVED THE TRACKING FORM AND VERIFIED APPLICANT ACCOUNTS.</b>		
<b>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application</b>	Applicants must complete the FCB’s <i>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application</i> . The application includes sections to collect the applicant’s demographics, contact information, current employer, formal education/degree type and field, and agreement to comply with FCB policies and procedures. Applicant Social Security Numbers are required. The FCB will redact the SSN on application forms after entering data into the FCB secure database.  Applicants complete all sections of the application. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed application to the FCB. This document must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.		
<b>Fee Payment</b>	The Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application Fee and the Exam Fee must be (1) paid directly by the applicant, (2) paid directly by the applicant’s employer or (3) billed to the FCB’s DCF contract a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.		
<b>Formal Education</b>  <i>Note: The FCB requires a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree. Employers held to a higher standard must verify the applicant’s degree field as part of their hiring process.</i>	Applicants must hold a minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree.  Eligible degrees are issued by educational institutions holding United States Department of Education and/or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognized accreditation at the time of award.  In lieu of an official transcript, the applicant’s employer must complete and submit a <i>Formal Education Verification Form</i> to the FCB. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed form to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.		

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>CWPI-Provisional Status Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>CWCM-Provisional Status Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>CWLC-Provisional Status Minimum Requirement</b>
<b>Criminal Background</b>	Applicants must have a clean criminal history for a minimum of 3-years prior to application for certification, including release from all sanctions. In lieu of conducting a criminal background check as part of the application process, the applicant’s employer must complete and submit a <i>Level 2 Background Verification Form</i> to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.		
<b>Content-Specific Training</b>	Applicants must complete option A or option B: A. Complete the Child Welfare Pre-service Training Program per 65C-33, F.A.C. The employer must complete and submit a <i>Pre-service Training Verification Form</i> to the FCB. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed form to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a maximum of 5 business days after the exam date. B. Meet eligibility requirements for and develop an Individual Waiver Training Plan per 65C-33, F.A.C. The employer must complete and submit Part 1 of the <i>Individual Waiver Training Form</i> to the FCB. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed form to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a minimum of 5 business days before the exam date. Note: As part of full certification, applicants must document completion of the Individual Waiver Training Plan when applying for full certification.		
<b>Written Exam</b>	CWPI Exam	CWCM Exam	CWCM Exam

**Table 2: Full Certification Standards**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>CWPI – Certified Status Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>CWCM – Certified Status Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>CWLC – Certified Status Minimum Requirement</b>
<b>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application</b>	Applicants must complete the FCB’s <i>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application</i> . This application indicates to the FCB that the applicant has completed the provisional period and is ready to apply for full certification. Applicants complete all sections of the application. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed application to the FCB. This document must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.		

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>CWPI – Certified Status Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>CWCM – Certified Status Minimum Requirement</b>	<b>CWLC – Certified Status Minimum Requirement</b>
<b>Related Work Experience</b>	<p>Applicants must complete a minimum of 6 months of full-time, on-the-job experience as a protective investigator or protective investigator supervisor; case manager or case manager supervisor; or licensing counselor or licensing counselor supervisor. Experience accrues after the provisional certification issue date. The employer must complete and submit a <i>Related Work Experience Verification Form</i> to the FCB. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed form to the FCB.</p> <p>This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.</p>		
<b>On-the-Job Supervision</b>	<p>Applicants must complete a minimum of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 field observations with follow-up case consultation.</li> <li>• 20 hours of individual supervision.</li> <li>• 10 hours of group supervision.</li> <li>• 10 hours of either group or individual supervision.</li> </ul> <p>Individuals must demonstrate competency on cases assigned to them. Employers may not assign “test cases” to individuals seeking certification who do not hold a caseload or directly supervise caseload carrying staff.</p> <p>Each person providing supervision for certification purposes must complete an <i>On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form</i>. The training entity’s designee scans and emails the completed form(s) to the FCB.</p> <p>Forms must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.</p>		
<b>Individual Waiver Training Plan Form, Part 2</b>	<p>Applicants who earned provisional status by submitting an Individual Waiver Training Plan in lieu of completing the full Pre-service Training Program must submit documentation verifying the training plan was completed during the provisional period.</p>		

**Table 3: Certification Maintenance and Renewal Standards**

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>CWPI, CWCM, CWLC Maintenance and Renewal Requirements</b>
<b>Continuing Education</b>	Certified professionals must complete annual continuing education units. A minimum of 20 CEUs must be completed each 12-month period. CEUs are verified in conjunction with certification renewal.
<b>Ethical and Professional Conduct</b>	Certified professionals must follow the FCB’s Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct at all times. Individuals who are found to have violated the Code are subject to disciplinary procedures, which can affect eligibility to maintain employment in the child welfare field. Always contact a supervisor or other authority if assistance is needed to ensure ethical boundaries are not violated.
<b>Biennial Renewal</b>	<p>Certification is valid for a two year period. The first certification cycle includes one year of provisional certification and one year of full certification. At the end of the first year of full certification, the credential will be renewed for a two year period thereafter.</p> <p>Renewal fees must be (1) paid directly by the applicant, (2) paid directly by the applicant’s employer or (3) billed to the FCB’s DCF no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> of the renewal year.</p>

## Fee Schedule

The following table lists Child Welfare credential related fees. In the event of a fee change, the fees posted online at <http://flcertificationboard.org/resources/policy-and-procedure/> take priority.

Note: DCF has entered into a contract with the FCB to pay for certification application, exam and renewal fees for employees working for the Department and Sheriff Offices under Grant Agreement to provide child welfare services. Some community based employers have chosen to pay for some or all certification fees for eligible employees. Unless specific written arrangements have been made between an employer and the FCB, the FCB holds the individual applicant responsible for timely fee payment. It is the responsibility of each applicant to verify certification fee payment expectations with their employers.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application Fee	\$100. This fee must be paid a minimum of 10 days before the exam date.
Exam Fee	\$50. This fee must be paid with each exam attempt, a minimum of 10 days before the exam date. Note: The fee will increase to \$100 on July 1, 2016.
Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application Fee	\$100. This fee must be paid a minimum of 10 days before the provisional certification expiration date. Note: This is not a current fee. This fee will take effect on July 1, 2016.
Biennial Renewal Fee	\$200. This fee must be paid on or before October 31 <sup>st</sup> of the renewal year. Individuals holding multiple child welfare credentials will be charged \$200 to renew the first credential and \$100 to renew additional child welfare credentials.
Credit Card Processing Fee	\$5 per credit card payment manually processed by the FCB. Note: There is not an additional fee for online credit card payments made online, through the individual applicant's certification account.
Late Renewal Fee	\$50. This late fee is assessed to renewal fees received between November 1 <sup>st</sup> and November 30 <sup>th</sup> of each calendar year.
<b>ALL FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE</b>	

## ...Before You Apply

The application process is primarily paper-based. However, all applicants must FIRST create an account in the FCB's certification database. This account will allow the FCB to attach your application, invoices and paid fees to your secure electronic record.

The FCB will not be able to process any certification application related documents or fees until you establish a REQUIRED FREE ONLINE ACCOUNT in the FCB's certification system.

### Mandatory Application Forms

This *Florida Child Welfare Professional Certification Candidate Guide* and all FCB mandatory application forms are posted on the FCB's website for free download at

<http://fpcertificationboard.org/resources/employer-sponsored-cw-certification-support-documents/>

To save and use these forms:

1. Open the form from the FCB's website.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete all applicant fields of data.
4. Save the completed form to your computer.
5. Email or print/mail the completed form to the appropriate party (see directions on each form).

Requirement/Form	Important Information
Child Welfare Certification Tracking Form	This form is to be completed by the training entity's designee and sent to the FCB no later than the last day of the second week of pre-service training. This is the official document the training entity designee and the FCB certification specialists will use to track applicants, certification requirements, fee payments, and approval to test. The FCB records the status of each requirement on this form. Individuals who meet all requirements a minimum of 10 business days before the test date will be registered for the exam. Individuals missing requirements have until no more than 5 business days before the test date to resolve issues and keep the requested test date.
FCB Online Certification System Account	Applicants must create an account in the FCB's online certification database. Accounts must be created during the first week of pre-service training.
Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application	Applicants must complete the FCB's <i>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application</i> . The form includes sections to collect the applicant's demographics, contact information, current employer, formal education/degree type and field, and agreement to comply with FCB policies and procedures. Applicant Social Security Numbers are required. The FCB will redact the SSN on application forms after entering data into the FCB secure database.

Requirement/Form	Important Information
	Applicants complete all sections of the application; the training entity's designee scans and emails the completed application to the FCB. This document must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.
Pre-service Training Verification Form	<p>The employer must complete and submit a <i>Pre-service Training Verification Form</i> to the FCB for each applicant who participates in the full Child Welfare Pre-service Training Program per 65C-33, F.A.C.</p> <p>The training entity's designee scans and emails the completed form to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a maximum of 5 business days after the exam date.</p>
Individual Waiver Training Plan Form	<p>The employer must complete and submit an <i>Individual Waiver Training Plan Form</i> to the FCB for each applicant who is eligible for an Individual Waiver Training Plan per 65C-33, F.A.C. This is a two part form: the first part documents the individual training plan and the second part documents completion of the training plan and, as such, must be re-submitted during the full certification process.</p> <p>The training entity's designee scans and emails the form (part 1 only) to the FCB. Part 1 must be received and approved a maximum of 5 business days before the exam date. Part 2 of the form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.</p>
Formal Education Verification Form	The employer must complete and submit a <i>Formal Education Verification Form</i> to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.
Level 2 Background Verification Form	The employer must complete and submit a <i>Level 2 Background Verification Form</i> to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.
Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application	Applicants complete all sections of the <i>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application</i> . The training entity's designee scans and emails the completed application to the FCB. This document must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.
Related Work Experience Verification Form	<p>The employer must complete and submit a <i>Related Work Experience Verification Form</i> to the FCB. The training entity's designee scans and emails the completed form to the FCB.</p> <p>This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.</p>
On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form	<p>Each person providing supervision for certification purposes must complete an <i>On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form</i>. The training entity's designee scans and emails the completed form(s) to the FCB.</p> <p>Forms must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.</p>

## Online Certification System Registration

All applicants for certification **MUST** create an account on the FCB's online certification database. You are strongly encouraged to complete this step as soon as possible because there is a 2-business day time frame between system registration and system approval.

To create your account, complete the following steps:

1. Go to the FCB's website at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org)
2. Select "My Account" from the top of the homepage. This link will open a new page.
3. Select "Register" from the top of the new page. This link will open a new page entitled New User Registration.
4. Complete all required fields of information. (First Name, Last Name, Phone, Email, Confirm Email, Password, Confirm Password, Contact Preference, Street Number, Street Name, Street Type, Address Type, City, Zip Code)
5. Select "Submit" at the bottom of the page. You will know that your registration request was successfully submitted when you see this message on the screen:  
**"User Successfully Created. You will receive an email once your account is approved and activated."**
6. The 2-business day clock starts when the FCB receives the registration request. During this time, FCB staff will review and approve the registration request. Upon approval, you will receive a system-generated email stating that your account has been approved and that you may access the system using the email and password you registered with.

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- It is **CRITICAL** that you keep track of the email and password you entered when creating your account. The system sends all password resets to the email address on your account. If your email address changes and you can no longer access it, you may be required to re-register.
- We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** that you register with your primary personal contact information instead of your work contact information.
- **DO NOT** request a password reset (through the online system) **UNTIL** you have received your approval email. Your email and password combination **WILL NOT WORK** until the FCB has approved your account and you have received the approval email.
- You will access your account to update your contact information, apply for certification and pay fees. It is your responsibility to ensure that the FCB has your current mailing address and email address.
- **DO NOT** complete multiple New User Registrations. This will lock you out of the system.
- For additional assistance with the registration process, contact our offices at 850-222-6314.

## Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application

### Directions

1. Download the *Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application* PDF file.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete all fields of data.
4. Save and print the form.
5. Sign the form and provide the hard copy to the training entity designee.
6. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB. Applications must be received and approved a minimum of 10 days before the exam date.

### Application for Child Welfare Professional Certification Sections

Application Section	Policy Statement
1. Credential Information	Identify the prevention credential discipline you are applying for: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Protective Investigator (CWPI) <input type="checkbox"/> Case Manager (CWCM) <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing Counselor (CWLC)
2. FCB Certification System Account	You are required to establish an FCB certification system account a minimum of 2 business days before you apply for certification.
3. Applicant Account Verification	Provide all requested information. If information is not available, enter "N/A" or "none". Applicants may not omit social security numbers, primary email address, or mailing address.
4. Work Information	Provide all requested information for your current position only. Applicants are required to attach a recent resume to their application, too.
5. Formal Education	Provide all requested information for your MOST RECENT ELIGIBLE DEGREE only.
6. Child Welfare Training	Indicate if you will complete the Child Welfare Pre-service Training Program or an Individual Waiver Training Plan.
7. Certification and/or Licensure Background	Provide all requested information.
8. Background History	You are required to disclose your criminal background history and authorize the FCB to conduct random criminal background checks to assure compliance with the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct. If you have a felony or first degree misdemeanor in your history, you must disclose specified information and provide official documentation showing

<b>Application Section</b>	<b>Policy Statement</b>
	your release from all court-ordered sanctions. Carefully read the <i>FCB Criminal Background Policy</i> and the <i>FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures</i> , which are posted on the FCB website at <a href="http://www.flcertificationboard.org">www.flcertificationboard.org</a> to ensure understanding of policy and requirements.
9. Ethical and Professional Conduct	You are required to acknowledge certain standards and your professional responsibility in this section. Before completing this section, you must have the most recent copy of the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct, which is posted on the FCB website at <a href="http://www.flcertificationboard.org">www.flcertificationboard.org</a>
10. Demographic Information	You are asked, but not required, to provide your demographic information in this section.
11. Payment Information	You are required to indicate how you will pay certification fees. Regardless of method of payment, an account must be created in the FCB's online certification system before the application and/or fees can be processed.
12. Assurance and Release	You are required to provide specified assurances and releases to the FCB as part of the certification application process.

### **FCB Accept/Deny Criteria**

The *Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application* will be approved when:

- ✓ All sections are complete, including agreements to follow and/or acknowledge FCB policy statements;
- ✓ The requested credential discipline (CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC) is identified and verified;
- ✓ The method of satisfying content specific training requirements is identified and verified (full pre-service training program or Individual Waiver Training Plan)
- ✓ All fees are paid or charged to the employer; and
- ✓ The application is submitted directly to the FCB from training entity's designee.

## Formal Education Verification Form

### Formal Education Requirement

All child welfare certification applicants must hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree. The FCB does not require applicants to hold a degree in a specified field. Employers holding employees to specified degree field requirements must verify the applicant's degree type/field as part of the hiring process.

The employer must complete and submit the *Formal Education Verification Form* a minimum of 10 days before the exam date.

### Directions

1. Download the *Formal Education Verification Form* PDF file.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete Section 1, only.
4. Save and print the form.
5. Provide the printed copy to the training entity designee, who will provide the form to the employer for completion.
6. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB. Forms must be received and approved a minimum of 10 days before the exam date.

### Formal Education Eligibility and Documentation Requirements

Eligible college/university Bachelor, Master or higher degrees are issued by educational institutions that are accredited at the time of degree award by an accreditation organization recognized by the Federal Department of Education and/or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

As a Bachelor's degree is a minimum hiring requirement for person's providing child welfare services, applicants are not required to submit an official transcript to the FCB. The employer must complete and submit the Formal Education Verification Form a minimum of 10 days before the exam date.

Applicants holding degrees issued by authorities outside of the jurisdiction of the United States must, at their own cost, seek an official degree verification, United States educational equivalency analysis, and transcript/degree translation to be submitted to the FCB from the verification entity.

### FCB Accept/Deny Criteria

The Formal Education Verification Form will be approved if:

- ✓ All sections are complete, and
- ✓ The completed form is scanned/emailed to FCB from training entity's designee.

## **Level 2 Background Verification Form**

### **Criminal Background History Requirement**

Applicants must have a clean criminal history for a minimum of 3-years prior to application for certification, including release from all sanctions. In lieu of conducting a criminal background check as part of the application process, the applicant's employer must complete and submit a Level 2 Background Verification Form to the FCB. This form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the exam date.

### **Directions**

1. Download the *Level 2 Background Verification Form* PDF file.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete Section 1, only.
4. Save and print the form.
5. Provide the printed copy to the training entity designee, who will provide the form to the employer for completion.
6. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB. Forms must be received and approved a minimum of 10 days before the exam date.

### **FCB Accept/Deny Criteria**

The Level 2 Background Verification Form will be approved if:

- ✓ All sections are complete, and
- ✓ The completed form is scanned/emailed to FCB from training entity's designee.

## Training Requirements

### Requirement

Applicants are required to either complete the Child Welfare Pre-service Training Program or meet eligibility requirements for and develop an Individual Waiver Training Plan per 65C-33, F.A.C.

### Directions for the Pre-service Training Verification Form

Pre-service training is documented by the training entity designee on FCB provided forms. If multiple training entities need to be contacted to document all components of the pre-service curriculum, provide a separate form to each training entity. **This form is downloaded and completed by the training entity designee(s) only. The applicant has no role in completing any part of this form.**

1. Download the *Pre-service Training Verification Form* PDF file.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Provide an electronic copy of the form to each training entity designee who delivered any component of the Pre-service training program for certification purposes.
4. Collect completed forms from training entity designee(s).
5. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB. Forms must be received and approved a MAXIMUM of 5 days AFTER the exam date.

### Directions for the Individual Waiver Training Plan Form

1. Download the Individual Waiver Training Plan Form PDF file.
2. Complete Section 1, only.
3. Save and print the form.
4. Provide the printed copy to the training entity designee, who will provide the form to the employer for completion.
5. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB. Forms must be received and approved at least 5 business days before the exam date.
6. This form is also used to document completion of the individual training plan and must be re-submitted during the full certification process. Individual training plans must be complete and the Part 2 of the form must be received and approved a minimum of 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.

### FCB Accept/Deny Criteria

The Pre-Service Training Verification Form and the Individual Waiver Training Plan Form will be approved if:

- ✓ All sections are complete, and
- ✓ The completed form is scanned/emailed to FCB from training entity's designee.

# The Examination Process

## Requirement

Earn a passing score on the Child Welfare Protective Investigator (CWPI) or the Child Welfare Case Manager (CWCM) written exam. The CWPI and the CWCM exams are both 100 item, multiple choice tests. The exam period is for no more than two hours.

## Taking the CWPI or CWCM Exam

**HOW:** The FCB only offers the CWPI and CWCM exams on a computer-based, online platform. The FCB does not offer either exam in paper-pencil format.

**WHEN and WHERE:** Each training entity manages its own test site, setting up its own calendar of testing dates and times. All mandatory forms must be received and approved and fees paid or billed a minimum of 10 business days before the requested exam date. At that time, the FCB will register the applicant for the exam.

## Special Accommodations

If you need special accommodations, such as additional testing time, please see the SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS section of the FCB website BEFORE REGISTERING FOR THE EXAM. Applicants who meet ADA requirements for special accommodations will be approved if all policy requirements are met within 30 calendar days of the test date. The Special Accommodations policy and application is maintained on the FCB website at <http://flcertificationboard.org/resources/policy-and-procedure/>

## Score Reporting

The minimum passing score is 78%. This means that you can miss a maximum of 22 questions and pass the exam.

You will receive unofficial score results immediately. Your score is official when your training entity designee receives the official score report from the FCB no more than one week from your exam date.

If you do not pass the exam, you will be provided with percentages of correctly answered items in each content domain to better focus future study efforts. For security reasons, you will not be provided with a copy of the examination to review.

## Re-testing

If you are eligible to retake the exam, you must wait a minimum of 72 hours (3 business days) between the first attempt and the second attempt.

Individuals who fail the second attempt must complete a Remedial Training Plan as a condition of exam re-tests eligibility. Remedial Training Plans are developed by the employing agency per 65C-33.004(7)(b), F.A.C. The employer must submit a copy of the Remedial Training Plan and verify the plan was completed before the FCB will register the applicant for a third exam attempt.

Individuals who do not earn a passing score on the third attempt are no longer eligible for provisional certification and must have employer approval to begin the certification training and testing processes again.

### **Rescheduling, Cancelling, and Missed Exams**

Approval to reschedule an exam must be granted by the training entity and approved by the FCB a minimum of five (5) business days before the requested new test date.

If you fail to show up for your examination at the scheduled time, you will be considered a “No-Show”, your examination fees will be forfeited, and you will be required to re-register and pay all fees to the FCB a minimum of five (5) business days before the requested rescheduled exam date.

### **Examination Rules and Security**

Failure to follow candidate instructions or conduct that result in violation of security or disruption of the administration of an examination may result in dismissal from the examination, voided examination scores, and forfeiture of examination fees. Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Writing on anything other than the authorized scratch paper provided at the administration site
- Looking at other candidate's examination
- Discussing examination content before, during, or after administration orally, electronically or in writing with any person or entity
- Copying or removing examination information from the testing area
- Use of cellphones or other electronic devices

Candidates may not attend the examination only to review or audit test materials. No unauthorized persons will be admitted into the testing area. All examination content is strictly confidential. Candidates may only communicate about the examination, using appropriate forms provided within the examination delivery system.

No books, papers, or other reference materials may be taken into the examination room. An area will be provided for storage of such materials.

No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination period. The candidate should listen carefully to the directions given by the Proctor and read the examination directions carefully.

## Provisional Certification Award

The CWPI, CWCM or CWLC credential is issued in provisional status within 10 business days of the FCB's receipt and approval of the applicant's passing test score and, if applicable, the *Pre-service Training Verification Form*.

There are three key dates you must be aware of:

**Applied Date:** The date the FCB received and approved the *Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application*.

**Issued Date:** The date the last requirement was received and approved by the FCB. This should be either the date the applicant earned a passing score on the exam OR the date the FCB received and approved the *Pre-service Training Verification Form*.

**Expiration Date:** The expiration date is 12-months from the date a passing score was earned on the CWPI or CWCM exam.

When the provisional status is awarded, the FCB will mail a cover letter and certification wallet card to the training entity's designee for distribution to the employer and the provisionally certified professional. The wall certificate is not issued until the credential is earned in certified status.

## Provisional Certification Period and Expiration Date

The provisional credential is valid for a 12-month period starting on the date a passing score is earned on the certification exam. All requirements for full certification must be complete, including submission of all certification upgrade materials and fee within **NO LESS THAN 10 BUSINESS DAYS OF THE PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION DATE**.

Employers may request a Provisional Certification Extension for cause. Applications must be submitted to the FCB for consideration at least 30 days before the provisional certification expiration date. The Provisional Certification Extension Application is posted on the FCB website.

If provisional status expires, the FCB will void the credential and the individual must re-apply for provisional certification status, meeting all requirements including earning a passing score on the certification exam.

## Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application

### Directions

1. Download the Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application PDF file.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete all fields of data.
4. Save and print the form.
5. Sign the form and provide the hard copy to the training entity designee.
6. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB. Applications must be received and approved a minimum of 10 days before the provisional certification expiration date.

### Application for Child Welfare Professional Certification Sections

Application Section	Policy Statement
1. Credential Information	Identify the credential discipline you are applying for: <input type="checkbox"/> Child Protective Investigator (CWPI) <input type="checkbox"/> Case Manager (CWCM) <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing Counselor (CWLC)
2. Demographics/Contact Information	Provide all requested information. If information is not available, enter "N/A" or "none". You may not omit social security numbers, primary email address, or mailing address.
3. Current Employer	Provide all requested information for your current employer.
4. Payment Information	You are required to indicate how you will pay certification fees. Regardless of method of payment, an account must be created in the FCB's online certification system before the application and/or fees can be processed.
5. Assurance and Release	You are required to provide specified assurances and releases to the FCB as part of the certification application process.

### FCB Accept/Deny Criteria

The Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application will be approved when:

- ✓ All sections are complete;
- ✓ The requested credential discipline (CWPI, CWCM, or CWLC) is identified and verified;
- ✓ All fees are paid or charged to the employer; and
- ✓ The application is submitted directly to the FCB from training entity's designee.

## Related Work Experience Verification Form

### Requirement

Applicants must document they completed a minimum of 6 months of full-time, on-the-job experience as a protective investigator or protective investigator supervisor; case manager or case manager supervisor; or licensing counselor or licensing counselor supervisor. Experience begins to accrue after the provisional certification issue date.

### Directions

1. Download the Related Work Experience Verification Form.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete Section 1, only.
4. Save and print the form.
5. Provide the printed copy to the training entity designee, who will provide the form to the employer for completion.
6. The training entity designee must ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB no more than 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.

### How to Calculate Related Work Experience Hours

- Full-time work is credited at the rate of 40 hours per week.
- Part-time work is credited on an hour-for-hour basis.
- Work completed prior to the provisional certification issue date is not eligible.

### FCB Accept/Deny Criteria

Related work experience will be approved if:

- ✓ The Work Experience Form is complete;
- ✓ An official position description or narrative of duties is provided;
- ✓ Documentation is submitted directly to the FCB from training entity's designee; and
- ✓ Documented work experience occurred during the provisional certification period.

## On-the-Job Supervision

### Requirement

**Part 1: Direct Supervision Requirement:** Applicants must complete field, group and individual supervision requirements in the discipline in which they are seeking certification. These requirements must be completed during the provisional certification period. Supervision is face-to-face contact between a qualified supervisor and a provisionally certified professional during which the applicant appraises the supervisor of the status of a case, the case is discussed, the supervisor provides the applicant with oversight and guidance in working the case, and evaluates the applicant’s performance. Individual and/or group supervision must occur in minimum of 15-minute increments. Field observations and follow-up case consultation should last approximately 2 hours.

Individuals must demonstrate competency on cases assigned to them. Employers may not assign “test cases” to individuals seeking certification who do not hold a caseload or directly supervise caseload carrying staff.

Type of Supervision	Minimum Requirement	Guidelines
Field Supervision	6 observations with follow-up case consultation. A maximum of 2 of the 6 observations may be in professional, office-based settings.	The observation and case consultation should take approximately 1.5 to 2 hours to complete at minimum.
Individual Supervision	20 hours of individual supervision.	One-on-one supervision in minimum increments of 15-minutes.
Group Supervision	10 hours of group supervision.	Supervision provided to two or more staff at one time. Staff refers to certified or uncertified persons.
Additional Supervision	10 hours of individual and/or group supervision.	See guidelines for individual and group supervision, above.

**Part 2: On-the-Job Competency Requirement:** In addition to completing the direct supervision requirements, the supervisor must also be able to state that he or she **DOES NOT have any concerns** about the applicant’s ability to competently perform child welfare services under standard supervision. If the supervisor states, “Yes, I do have concerns ...” the supervision hours documented on the form will NOT be eligible for certification purposes.

### Definition of a Qualified Supervisor

For certification purposes, a qualified supervisor is the applicant’s immediate supervisor or any other agency supervisor, trainer, mentor, quality assurance staff or other agency management/leadership staff assigned by the employer to provide supervision to employees seeking certification. *Supervision provided by a relative, any person sharing the same household, or any person in a romantic, domestic, or familial relationship with the applicant is not acceptable toward fulfillment of certification requirements.*

## Directions

Supervision is documented by a qualified supervisor on FCB provided forms. If multiple supervisors need to be contacted to document all hours, provide a separate form to each supervisor.

1. Download the On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete Section 1, only.
4. Save and print the form or save and provide an electronic copy of the form to each person who provided on-the-job supervision for certification purposes.
5. The training entity designee must collect all completed forms, ensure each form is complete, scan and email the form(s) to the FCB no more than 10 business days before the provisional certification expiration date.

## How to Calculate On-the-Job Supervision Hours

To document the on-the-job supervision provided to the applicant, the qualified supervisor must maintain employer based documentation, as described below. Do not report supervision hours in increments of less than 15-minutes.

**Employer-based documentation:** Qualified supervisors must document supervision according to agency protocol. These supervision records are maintained by the employer and are not submitted to the FCB with the form, however, employers are required to maintain supervision records that support the information documented on the form in case of audit.

**On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form:** Each individual qualified supervisor must complete an *On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form*. Collectively, the *On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Forms* must document completion of the total on-the-job supervision requirement.

## FCB Accept/Deny Criteria

On-the-Job Supervision will be approved if:

- ✓ The On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form is complete;
- ✓ Supervision was provided by a qualified supervisor.
- ✓ Documentation is submitted directly to the FCB from training entity's designee.
- ✓ Documented on-the-job supervision occurred during the provisional certification period.

# Certification Award, Continuing Education & Renewal

## Certification Award

The CWPI, CWCM or CWLC credential is issued in certified status within 10 business days of the FCB's receipt and approval of the Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application, Related Work Verification Form, On-the-Job Supervision Form(s), and, if applicable, the Individual Waiver Training Plan Form documenting completion of the training plan during the provisional period.

The credential issue date is the day the last requirement was approved by the FCB.

Depending on the initial full certification award date, first time credential holders may be certified for slightly more or less than a standard 12-month period.

- ✓ Credentials earned in November – July will renew for the first time in the upcoming October. Renewed credentials will be issued for a 2-year period.
- ✓ Credentials earned in August – October will renew for the first time the following October. Renewed credentials will be issued for a 2-year period.

The full 24-month renewal cycle will start after the credential is renewed for the first time.

## Certification Maintenance

Maintaining a credential in good standing is very important. To further our mission of public safety, the FCB maintains a public-access database allowing verification of an individual's certification status and ethical history. To remain in good standing, certified professionals must:

- ✓ Actively participate in annual continuing education to maintain your knowledge and skill base.
- ✓ Follow the FCB Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.
- ✓ Complete the renewal process in a timely manner, every other October.

Please carefully read this section to ensure you understand maintenance and renewal requirements.

## Continuing Education Requirement

All persons holding the CWPI, CWCM and CWLC credentials must complete 20 hours of continuing education units (CEUs) per year. One CEU is equal to 50 minutes of instruction.

Training content must be related to at least one of the child welfare performance domains and must be non-repetitive (i.e., the same course cannot be claimed more than one time during each credentialed period, even if the course was taken annually.)

Continuing education is verified every two years, in conjunction with credential renewal.

## Eligible Continuing Education Providers

Continuing education units must be earned from a FCB recognized or approved CEU training provider. Some training providers hold approval from other entities that are recognized by the FCB; other training providers apply for and hold FCB Training Provider Status. The FCB will honor CEUs issued by any of the following providers:

1. College or university coursework offered by institutions holding Federal Department of Education and/or Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) recognized accreditation.
2. Training providers approved to offer CEUs by other state or national professional licensing or certification boards.
3. FCB Approved Education and Training Providers: The FCB will award FCB Education and Training Provider status and a number to approved applicants. A list of approved FCB Education and Training Providers is maintained on our webpage at [www.flcertificationboard.org](http://www.flcertificationboard.org).

## How to Document Compliance with CEU Requirements

You must provide supporting documentation for all training events claimed for CEU credit. The FCB will accept the following forms of training documentation:

- Certificates of Completion/Attendance issued by the training provider.
- Unofficial college/university transcripts with an attached course description.
- Official employer training tracking database reports.

Training documentation must include the following information:

- Participant Name
- Title of course/training/educational event
- Event sponsor/provider
- Delivery date(s)
- Number of Contact Hours

If your training documentation is missing any of the required information, you must contact the training provider and request a letter, on official letterhead, providing the necessary information. Submit these letters with all other documentation.

## How to Calculate Training Hours

College coursework is credited at the rate of 45-clock hours per 3-semester hour course.

Partial-day, full-day and multi-day training events are credited for instructional time only. Breaks are deducted from the total hours claimed.

Conferences are credited for break-out session and plenary sessions only. Breaks are deducted from the total hours claimed. Please attach a copy of the conference program to your application.

## CEU Audit

Approximately 3 months prior to the credential's expiration date, the FCB will randomly select 20% of the certified population for a CEU audit to ensure compliance with the CEU requirement.

Audited individuals will be notified of such approximately 2 months prior to the credential's expiration date and must submit CEU documentation to the FCB for review and approval PRIOR to the credential expiration date. Please note: payment of renewal fees and non-submission or denial of submitted CEUs may result in the credential being placed on inactive status.

Although only audited individuals are required to submit CEU documentation to the FCB as part of the renewal process, all certified professionals must maintain documentation of compliance with CEU requirements for 3 years, in case of future audit.

## FCB CEU Accept/Deny Criteria

CEU documentation will be approved if:

- ✓ The documentation includes all required information;
- ✓ The training was completed between the certification award and expiration dates; and
- ✓ There is a clear link between the training event and the scope of service for a child welfare professional.

Failure to meet these requirements may result in disciplinary or ethical action. Credentials will not be renewed until CEU requirements are satisfied.

## Credential Renewal

Child Welfare credentials renew every two years, on or before October 31<sup>st</sup>. Depending on the initial full certification award date, first time credential holders may be certified for slightly more or less than a standard 12-month period.

- ✓ Credentials earned in November – July will renew for the first time in the upcoming October. Renewed credentials will be issued for a 2-year period.
- ✓ Credentials earned in August – October will renew for the first time the following October. Renewed credentials will be issued for a 2-year period.

The full 24-month renewal cycle will start after the credential is renewed for the first time.

## Renewal Notice Process

The FCB will send out renewal notices in August and September of the renewal year. Renewal fees must be paid and, if audited, CEU documentation must be approved no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> of the renewal year. Individuals who DO NOT meet renewal requirements by October 31<sup>st</sup> may pay the renewal fee, a \$50 late fee per credential and must submit CEU (regardless of audit status) no later than November 30<sup>th</sup> of the renewal year. Individuals who DO NOT meet renewal requirements by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the

renewal year will be automatically placed in inactive status and must complete the FCB Reinstatement Process to recertify.

## **FCB Appeal Process**

When an applicant is denied certification, questions the results of the application review process, questions examination results, or is subject to an action by the FCB or its agents that he or she deems unjustified, the applicant has the right to an inquiry and/or an appeal.

An **inquiry** is when an applicant requests a written summary from the FCB that explains the reason for the action in question. A letter requesting an inquiry must be made to the FCB's Director of Certification, in writing, within 30 calendar days of notification of FCB decision and/or action. An applicant shall be considered notified within 3 days of the date of the FCB's notification. If the applicant does not agree with the decision and/or rationale of the FCB, he or she may request an appeal.

An **appeal** may be made to the FCB's Director of Certification, in writing, within 30 calendar days of notification of FCB decision and/or action on the applicant's inquiry. An applicant shall be considered notified within 3 days of the date of the FCB's notification. The written appeal will be provided to the appropriate committee of the FCB's Behavioral Health Advisory Council for review and action. The applicant will be notified in writing within 5-business days of the committee's decision. The committee's decision is final and not subject to further appeal.

# Mandatory Forms

Use this section to preview directions and required forms for certification application. FCB mandatory application forms for both the CWPI, CWCM and CWLC Provisional Status and for full certification are posted on the FCB’s website for free download at <http://flcertificationboard.org/resources/employer-sponsored-cw-certification-support-documents/>

To save and use these forms:

1. Open the form from the FCB’s website.
2. Rename and save the file to your computer.
3. Complete all applicant fields of data.
4. Save the completed form to your computer.
5. Email or print/mail the completed form to the appropriate party (see directions on each form).

<b>Provisional Status Application Forms</b>	<b>Certified Status Application Forms</b>
<i>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Application</i>	<i>Child Welfare Provisional Certification Upgrade Application</i>
<i>Formal Education Verification Form</i>	<i>Related Work Experience Verification Form</i>
<i>Level 2 Background Verification Form</i>	<i>On-the-Job Supervision and Competency Verification Form.</i>
<i>Pre-service Training Verification Form or Individual Waiver Training Plan Form</i>	<i>Individual Waiver Training Plan Form (only for applicants who earned provisional status</i>



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**Child  
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