

**THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION**

P.O. Box 1801  
New Bedford, MA 02741-1801  
(508) 842-8707

**CPS INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS**

*The attached is information pertaining to the **Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) Credential**. Pay particular attention to the enclosed **CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT GUIDELINES**. After reading the enclosed material, if you have any questions, please contact the Certification Office at (508) 842-8707. MBSACC will **not** be responsible for information that is obtained outside of this office.*

**BASIC EDUCATION DOCUMENTATION**

*At the time application is made, all applicants will be required to provide documentation of having earned **either** a High School Diploma **or** a GED. Any applicant who has continued academic education may substitute a transcript from an accredited college or university as documentation in lieu of the diploma or GED if s/he wishes to do so.*

**TESTING:**

*All applicants for CPS Certification must take and pass the IC&RC International Examination for Prevention Specialists (CPS). Testing will be computer-based.*

*Once an application is reviewed and approved, the applicant will be sent a Certification Test Reservation Form, which must be completed and returned to the Certification Office along with the test fee (\$300.00). The information supplied on the reservation form by the applicant will be provided to the testing company (SMT). The testing company will notify the applicant **via email** of the instructions for taking the computer-based test along with information on the locations of testing centers. The applicant will have six months from notification by the testing company in which to schedule and take the exam at a testing center. Failure to appear at the scheduled testing will result in the forfeiture of the test fee. The testing company will provide additional information on cancellation policies.*

*Test results will be provided to the applicant via email by the testing company. If an applicant fails the exam, s/he will have to wait for a period of 90 days before re-scheduling an exam.*

## **IMPORTANT**

*The application, including the supervisory form, **must** be hand-printed/ written (typed applications will not be accepted and will be returned to the applicant).*

## **51% RULE**

*Please be advised that you must be working and/or living in Massachusetts at least 51% of your time at the time application for Certification is made.*

**DO NOT** send anything to the letterhead address by any delivery service such as UPS or FedEx, etc., to meet a deadline date or for any other reason. They cannot deliver mail to a post office box at a postal station. Just be certain that any submittal is **postmarked** by any deadline date that must be met.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT GUIDELINES**

*All training and education must have been completed within the past ten (10) years.*

*In addition to transcripts, the applicant may be asked to provide an official course description for all academic courses which are being submitted for consideration.*

*For initial Certification, MBSACC limits Distance Learning (i.e., online courses/programs or correspondence/home-study courses, etc.) to no more than 30% of the total number of education hours required. Distance Learning accrued prior to January 1, 2017 is not admissible. MBSACC does not accept academic credit which is awarded for:*

- 1) "prior learning" experience,*
- 2) courses certified by use of a challenge examination,*
- 3) courses that were audited, or*
- 4) courses of independent study research*

*Academic courses must be specific to the CPS education requirement and no partial credit is given. A passing grade of "C" or better is required (or "P" in a pass/fail situation).*

*MBSACC allows 15 hours per academic credit (that is, 45 hours per 3-credit course) for academic courses specific to the certification education requirements.*

**Documentation** for workshops, conferences, etc., must be submitted with the application or the training will not be considered. The participant's name must be officially recorded on the certificate by the sponsoring agency. The participant may **not** affix his/her own name to any certificate, either by hand or by typing. Only an authorized agent of the sponsor of the training may fill in the participant's name. If an agent of the sponsoring agency affixes the participant's name to the certificate **by hand**, s/he must print his/her own name (initials will not suffice) **and** the date in parentheses **beside** the participant's name or the certificate will not be admissible. The offering title, specific dates attended, the location of the training, and the number of approved training hours must appear on the certificate as well. Brochures, registration forms, canceled checks, etc., do **NOT** constitute proper documentation and will not be accepted.

*For programs that have not received official MBSACC approval, the following information must be provided:*

- \* training description*
- \* name and credentials of instructor(s)*
- \* location of training*
- \* sponsor(s) of training*
- \* program agenda, complete with beginning and ending times for each training segment*

*Continuing education hours exclude 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). Be advised that MBSACC is under no obligation to accept training hours approved by other organizations.*

*Continuing education credit is not admissible in situations where the applicant has provided the training and/or teaching. Also, **in-service education and on-the-job training are NOT admissible for credit.***

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**CPS APPLICATION INFORMATION**

*The applicant may apply for CPS Certification once all of the requirements have been met. Applications must be hand-printed. Typed application forms will not be accepted.*

***The supervisor(s) who will be completing the Work Verification Form(s) must be made aware that they must mail the form(s) directly back to MBSACC post-marked by the deadline date. They must also be made aware that the forms must be hand-printed/written, and it is not admissible to use the form fill-in function of word processing software. Typed forms will not be accepted.***

*Any verification form that is submitted to us with the application by the applicant will automatically render the application void and a new verification form will have to be submitted. The verification form(s) must be returned to us directly by the supervisor.*

*MBSACC will not be held responsible for information you obtain outside of this office. **If you have any questions, please call the Certification Office at (508) 842-8707.***

## **IMPORTANT - TO ALL CPS APPLICANTS**

1. The eligibility requirements must be completed before applying for CPS Certification.
2. Your application must include all supporting documentation **and** the review fee or it will be considered incomplete. The application, including the supervisory form, **must** be hand-printed/ written (typed applications will not be accepted and will be returned to the applicant).
3. The fees for the Certification process are as follows:
  - \$ 15.00 - Application Packet (E-mail Version - free). Applications must be ordered on/ before 2/ 15 for the June Exam, 5/ 15 for the September Exam, and 8/ 15 for the December Exam
  - \$125.00 - Application Review Fee - this fee **must** be mailed in with your application.
  - \$300.00 - Exam Fee – to be paid upon notification.
  - \$ 60.00 - Certification Fee - to be paid upon notification of passing the IC&RC exam and prior to the issuance of the Certification certificate.

All fees are **non-refundable**. Sending in the wrong fee with your submittal can cause serious delays. Checks or money orders should be made payable to **MCVCAC**. MBSACC charges a \$20.00 fee for checks returned to us (for **any** reason) by our bank.

**BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
CERTIFIED PREVENTION SPECIALIST (CPS)**

**EDUCATION:**

**120 hours with a Bachelor Degree (or higher) in Human Services, Public Health, Social Work, or a closely related field.**

<b>HOURS</b>	<b>EDUCATION DISCIPLINE</b>
6	<i>Prevention Ethics</i>
10	<i>Cultural Competence</i>
10	<i>Mental Health</i>
5	<i>Gambling</i>
5	<i>HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C</i>
5	<i>Violence Prevention (i.e., bullying)</i>
30 (5 hours in each category)	<b>Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Categories:</b> <i>Opioids, Marijuana, Tobacco, Alcohol, Addictions 101, Prescription Drugs</i>
30 (5 hours in each category)	<b>Prevention Practice and Theory (PPT) Categories:</b> <i>Strategic Prevention Frameworks (SPF), Social Norms, Environmental Strategies, Youth Development, Communications/Media, Evidence-Based Practices</i>
19	<b>Electives:</b> <i>Can be completed in the above-mentioned categories or other prevention topics</i>
<b>120 TOTAL</b>	

**200 hours with anything less than a Bachelor Degree**

<b>HOURS</b>	<b>EDUCATION DISCIPLINE</b>
6	<i>Prevention Ethics</i>
10	<i>Cultural Competence</i>
10	<i>Mental Health</i>
5	<i>Gambling</i>
5	<i>HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C</i>
5	<i>Violence Prevention (i.e., bullying)</i>
30 (5 hours in each category)	<b>Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Categories:</b> <i>Opioids, Marijuana, Tobacco, Alcohol, Addictions 101, Prescription Drugs</i>
30 (5 hours in each category)	<b>Prevention Practice and Theory (PPT) Categories:</b> <i>Strategic Prevention Frameworks (SPF), Social Norms, Environmental Strategies, Youth Development, Communications/Media, Evidence-Based Practices</i>
99	<b>Electives:</b> <i>Can be completed in the above-mentioned categories or other prevention topics</i>
<b>200 TOTAL</b>	

**EXPERIENCE:**

*2,000 hours of documented, supervised alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse prevention specific work experience. It is recommended that the documented supervision be done by a Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS). 2,000 hours is the equivalent of one year full-time experience, which can be completed as a volunteer or paid staff.*

**SUPERVISION:**

*120 hours with a minimum of 10 hours in each of the CPS domains (see below). Supervision is broadly defined as the administrative, clinical, and evaluative process of monitoring, assessing, and enhancing one's performance. The supervision may have been completed under more than one supervisor and/or agency.*

**CODE OF ETHICS:**

*Applicant must sign a prevention specific code of ethics statement or affirmation statement.*

**CPS DOMAINS**

- 1) Planning and Evaluation*
- 2) Prevention Education & Service Delivery*
- 3) Communication*
- 4) Community Organization*
- 5) Public Policy & Environmental Change*
- 6) Professional Growth & Responsibility*

## **CPS GENERAL INFORMATION**

*The following general information applies to the CPS credential:*

- ❖ *An official college transcript is required as documentation of academic education and should be sent directly to MBSACC from the college or university.*
- ❖ *Documentation of all other training and education (for example, Certificates of Attendance).*
- ❖ *Applicants will be required to sign a Code of Ethical Conduct.*
- ❖ *Applicants will be required to sign and date an Authorization and Release form.*
- ❖ *Problems with individual applications will be addressed in writing to the applicant.*
- ❖ *All fees are non-refundable.*
- ❖ *All questions regarding the application and the Certification process should be directed to the MBSACC Certification Office at (508) 842-8707.*

### **CERTIFICATION TIME PERIOD**

*All MBSACC certifications encompass a 2-year period. Two dates, the date of issue and the date of expiration, will appear on the issued certificate of Certification along with an official Certification Number.*

### **RECERTIFICATION**

*To maintain the high standards of this professional practice and to assure continuing awareness of new knowledge in the field, MBSACC requires recertification every two years. To be recertified an individual must:*

- 1. Hold a current and valid CPS Certificate issued by MBSACC.*
- 2. Submit 40 contact hours of approved continuing education specific to prevention, approved by MBSACC, as described in the Recertification Policy.*
- 3. Complete a Recertification Application, and pay the Recertification fee.*

## **CPS APPLICATION PROCESS**

*An applicant for certification must:*

- ❖ *Complete and submit application.*
- ❖ *Submit all required Supervisory Forms. **Please Note:** Supervisory Verification Forms must be returned **directly** to MBSACC by the supervisor.*
- ❖ *All applications and all Supervisory Forms must be hand-printed/ written. Typed forms will not be accepted.*
- ❖ *Submit **one** copy of your current résumé.*
- ❖ *Submit official job descriptions for all work entries. The job description must be signed and dated by the applicant **and** the supervisor.*
- ❖ *Document the completion of all required approved training and/or coursework. Documentation must include transcripts for applicable coursework and Certificates of Attendance for all other formal training specific to the educational requirements. All training and education must have been completed within the past ten (10) years.*
- ❖ *Remit the non-refundable application fee of \$125.00 with the application to:*

**MBSACC**  
P.O. Box 7070  
Worcester, MA 01605

*MBSACC will review the completed application package to determine completeness and eligibility for Certification. Applicants who meet all certification requirements will be notified in writing of the approval of the application, and will be scheduled to sit for the IC&RC International CPS Examination.*

*Once issued, the Prevention Specialist Certification covers a two-year period after which it must be renewed. Renewal information will be forwarded with the CPS Certificate.*

## **IC&RC AND RECIPROCITY**

*The Massachusetts Board is a member of the International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC). Membership in the IC&RC requires a commitment to adhere to multi-faceted standards designed to ensure counselor competency.*

*Counselors certified in Massachusetts at the CADC level or above and Prevention Specialists certified at the CPS level are eligible for Reciprocity in the more than fifty states and countries that are members of the IC&RC, provided that same type and level of credential is offered.*

### **RECIPROCITY INTO MASSACHUSETTS:**

*Addiction professionals certified/licensed at the reciprocity level by an IC&RC member board who relocate to Massachusetts may transfer their credential to MBSACC using the reciprocity process. No additional requirements will have to be met by the certified/licensed professional using this process to transfer the credential to Massachusetts.*

*To begin the reciprocity process, certified/licensed professionals must contact their current IC&RC credentialing board and request a Reciprocity Application. The certified/licensed addiction professional should complete the application and send it to their current IC&RC credentialing board. That board will then forward the application to IC&RC who will approve the request and forward it to the Massachusetts board. MBSACC will then issue the certified/licensed addiction professional the equivalent credential offered in Massachusetts.*

### **RECIPROCITY OUT OF MASSACHUSETTS:**

*Addiction professionals certified by MBSACC who relocate to another state, country, or nation may transfer their MBSACC reciprocal credential to the new jurisdiction using the reciprocity process only if the new jurisdiction is an IC&RC member board. **Additional requirements may be imposed upon the certified addiction professional depending on the laws and regulations governing the practice of addiction-related services in the new jurisdiction.** Therefore, certified addiction professionals are encouraged to contact the IC&RC member board in the new jurisdiction to determine if any additional requirements must be met. To obtain contact information for new jurisdictions, please visit [www.internationalcredentialing.org](http://www.internationalcredentialing.org) and click on Member Boards.*

*To begin the reciprocity process, MBSACC-certified addiction professionals must contact the MBSACC Certification Office and request a Reciprocity Application. The certified addiction professional should complete the application and send it back to MBSACC. The Certification Office will then forward the application to IC&RC who will approve the request and forward it to the credentialing board in the new jurisdiction. That credentialing board will then issue the certified addiction professional the equivalent credential offered unless additional laws or regulations governing the practice of addiction-related services in the new jurisdiction must first be met.*