

# CHILD CARE INFORMATION



## CDAE Frequently Asked Questions

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### What are the differences between the Florida CDAE and the National CDA? [\(Back to Top\)](#)

- The Florida CDAE is a Child Development Associate Equivalency Certification that is recognized as equivalent to the National CDA. The certificate may not be recognized in other states. The Florida CDAE was developed to allow more accessibility to training programs in order to meet the diverse needs of child care providers around the state of Florida. The Florida CDAE can be obtained by attending and graduating from an approved program listed on the Department of Children and Families (DCF) website. The Florida CDAE has a 5 year renewal process.
- National CDA is a nationally recognized Child Development Associate Certification. The Council for Professional Recognition offers both the original certification and a renewal process every 5 years. For more information, please call 1 800-424-4310 or visit them on line at <http://www.cdacouncil.org>.

**How do I apply for a Florida CDAE or Florida CDAE Renewal?** ([Back to Top](#))

- [Florida CDAE](#) - Visit the DCF website and locate a Florida CDAE program provider in your area, statewide or on-line. Choose a provider and complete their program. Each program listed on the DCF website has met the Department of Children and Families rules and regulations and has been approved as a Florida CDAE provider in the state of Florida; however, training providers operate as independent program.
- [Florida CDAE Renewal](#) - Visit the DCF website for information on the current Florida CDAE Renewal process.

**What is the Florida CDAE renewal fee?** ([Back to Top](#))

- Effective August 1, 2005 the processing fee is \$25. Checks should be made out to the State of Florida, and submitted in the form of a business check or money order. No personal checks will be accepted.
- Please visit our web site <http://www.myflorida.com/childcare> for detailed information related to the Gold Seal Quality Care Program, the Florida Child Development Associate (CDAE) Equivalency Program, and the Florida Director Credential Program.
  - Gold Seal - Click on the "Gold Seal" Link
  - Florida CDAE - Click on the link "Training Requirements" and then the link "CDAE".
  - Florida Director Credential - Click on the link "Training Requirements" and then the link "Director Credential".

**How do I apply for a National CDA or renewal of a National CDA?** ([Back to Top](#))

Contact the Council for Professional Recognition at 1-800-424-4310, or visit them on line at <http://www.cdacouncil.org>.

**How do I become a Florida CDAE program provider?** ([Back to Top](#))

Visit the DCF website for an application and instructions. Each potential program must submit a completed application to the Department of Children and Families Credential Unit. Upon receipt, the application will be reviewed both internally and by selected education representatives. Applicants will receive written notice of approval or denial. Upon approval, the program will be listed on our website as an approved Florida CDAE program provider with an appropriate active date.

**Is the Florida CDAE and National CDA renewal mandatory in the state of Florida?** ([Back to Top](#))

- To meet the licensing requirement, individuals working in a child care facility with a Florida CDAE must complete the renewal process every 5 years to keep the certificate active.
- Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) requires the lead prekindergarten instructors to hold, at a minimum, a current Florida CDAE or National CDA. You can also meet this requirement by having an associates degree or higher with specific educational requirements and work experience. A full explanation of requirements, contact information and frequently asked questions can be found by visiting the VPK website at <http://www.upkflorida.com>.

**What if I do not renew by June 30, 2005?** ([Back to Top](#))

- The deadline has been extended. All Florida CDAE or National CDA certificates issued before December 31, 2003 must be renewed by December 31, 2008.
- All Florida CDAE or National CDA certificated issued after December 31, 2003, must be renewed before the stated expiration date. If your Florida CDAE does not have an expiration date, it is valid for 5 years from issuance date.

**When do I renew an active Florida CDAE or National CDA?** ([Back to Top](#))

- Florida CDAE - You must submit your renewal application and supporting documentation for review no earlier than one year prior to the expiration date of an active Florida CDAE. The renewal date will be determined by the active Florida CDAE expiration date. If your Florida CDAE does not have an expiration date, it is valid for 5 years from issuance date
- National CDA - You must comply with The Council for Professional Recognition's renewal requirements. For more information, please call 1 800-424-4310 or visit them on line at <http://www.cdacouncil.org>.

**Can I renew my Florida CDAE or National CDA after it is expired?** ([Back to Top](#))

- If a Florida CDAE is not renewed prior to the expiration date, the individual may submit a renewal application for up to 3 years after the expiration date. A person with an expired National CDA or Florida CDAE will not be eligible to be counted as a credentialed staff person for the purpose of meeting licensing standards.
- The National CDA Council for Professional Recognition has a waiver process available for expired National CDA's. For more information, please call 1-800-424-4310 or visit them on line at <http://www.cdacouncil.org>.

**Do the alternatives to a Florida CDAE and National CDA (ex: employment history exemption, formal education qualification) require renewal?** ([Back to Top](#))

There are 5 ways to meet the staff credential licensing requirement: National CDA, Florida CDAE, Employment History Exemption, Formal Education Qualification or School-Age Certificate. Many times Employment History Exemption and Formal Education Qualification are referred to as a waiver, exemption or grandfathering. Please note, only the Florida CDAE and National CDA are eligible for Florida CDAE renewal. Employment History Exemption and Formal Education Qualification meet the staff credential requirement, however, a renewal is not required. The School-Age Certification program has its own renewal procedure available on the DCF website.

**I have both CDA/CDAE and an AA or higher degree. What do I renew?** ([Back to Top](#))

An associates degree or higher in field\* or an associates degree or higher out of field with 6 credits in field qualifies as a staff credential that does not need to be renewed. Your formal education qualifies you as a credentialed staff person and is a higher credential than a Florida CDAE or National CDA and does not require renewal because degrees do not expire. If you meet this qualification and also have a National CDA or Florida CDAE, you are not required to renew your CDA/CDAE, however you may do so.

\* In field is defined as coursework in early childhood or child development.

**Can I teach VPK with my Staff Credential?** ([Back to Top](#))

For VPK, the minimum requirement for the lead teacher in each VPK classroom is an active Florida CDAE or National CDA. You can also meet this requirement by having an associates degree or higher with specific educational requirements and work experience. A full explanation of requirements can be found by visiting the VPK website at <http://www.upkflorida.com>. On this website you can post questions, review frequently asked questions or review the VPK legislation by clicking on the link "Legislation" signed by the Governor. Pages 11 through 15 concentrate on both teacher and provider requirements.

**How do I know if I have a Florida CDAE?** ([Back to Top](#))

If you have attended one of our approved CDAE programs for a minimum of 120 clock hours, and received a certificate of completion, you should have a CDAE. Please refer to the list of program providers on the DCF website.

**How do I locate a lost Florida CDAE or National CDA?** ([Back to Top](#))

If you are unable to locate a copy of your CDAE or CDA credential, you have the following options:

- Contact the program that issued the certificate to see if they can reissue it;
- Contact old employer(s) to see if the certificate is in your file; and/or
- Review your transcript on line to see if the DCF form CF-FSP 5206, Staff Credential, was issued for your CDAE or CDA. A form 5206 may be used as proof of a CDAE or CDA, for renewal purposes.

**What are the key points when submitting the Florida CDAE renewal application?** ([Back to Top](#))

- The CDAE Renewal application is located on the DCF website.
- Send the original application (signed and dated). Do not send original supporting documents, as they will not be returned. Send only requested documentation.
- Upon review of your application, you will receive either a Florida CDAE Renewal Certificate or a "Short Fall" letter explaining those requirements that still need to be met before a certificate can be issued. Please allow 6-8 weeks for processing.
- Faxed documents are discouraged; due to incoming volume and low quality of some received documents.
- The typical wait time is 2 weeks, however, due to the recently increased volume of renewal applications, the wait time may be up to 2 months before receiving a certificate or a "Short Fall" letter.
- Faxed documents will be accepted, however, it will not accelerate the processing time.
- There is no need to "express mail" or "certify" the application.

**What if my documentation is not in the last 5 years?** ([Back to Top](#))

All requirements for the Florida CDAE renewal must be within the timeframes identified on the application

and valid on the date the application is received by the Child Care Program Office.

**How do I meet the requirement of membership to an early childhood or child development organization?** ([Back to Top](#))

- Membership must be an individual membership unless you are the director.
- Only one director per facility or home can use a facility level membership.
- Due to the diversity of membership organizations (faith-based, Montessori, etc.), a list is not provided. Individuals are asked to locate and select a membership in early childhood or child development that meets their beliefs and needs.
- For a potential list of membership organization, you may use the web to perform a web search with the following words "Early Childhood Membership Organization".

**How do I provide proof of employment?** ([Back to Top](#))

- A letter signed by your employer is preferred and does not need to be notarized.
- If you are the director and there is no peer or supervisor to verify your hours, you may choose to write the letter yourself; however, it must be notarized.
- If you operate a family child care home, you may use a copy of your family child care home license to verify number of hours of operation for employment verification.
- W-2's or pay check stubs may be used, however not required nor encouraged for privacy reasons.
- If you're not currently working in field, you may use volunteer time to meet this requirement.

**How does the Director Credential affect my Florida CDAE renewal?** ([Back to Top](#))

- Obtaining a Director Credential does not waive individuals from renewing the Florida CDAE or National CDA. Fundamentally, each credential serves a different purpose for licensing requirements and are not considered equivalent. All requirements must still be met before a Florida CDAE renewal will be issued.
- You may use your director credential coursework to meet your Florida CDAE coursework requirements as long as the coursework was completed within 5 years of your application being received by the department's Child Care Program Office.

**What is a Continuing Education Unit (CEU)?** ([Back to Top](#))

- The International Association of Continuing Education and Training (IACET) defines 1 CEU as equal to 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. For more information about becoming a CEU provider, please visit <http://www.iacet.org>
- There is a cost associated with acquiring CEU's and it is set by the organization providing the coursework.

**What is the difference between a CEU and in-service hours?** ([Back to Top](#))

- A CEU is an approved, validated and organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction. Documentation is provided for CEU training.
- In-service training is course work that is not governed nor validated by a governing body. In-service training provides positive guidance and educational experiences, however, it is not considered continuing education units.
- CEU's may be used for in-service hours but most in-services may not be used for CEU hours.

**How do I meet the course work requirement (CEU / 45 Hours / 3 College Credits)?** ([Back to Top](#))

- Please remember there are 4 ways to meet this requirement, as outlined in the application. The goal is to ensure you have a total of 45 hours in professional education. You can obtain these hours through college credits, CEU's, professional education hours, or a combination of professional education.
- One college credit is equal to 15 hours and one CEU is equal to 10 hours.
- All coursework must be completed within 5 years from date application is received in the department's Child Care Program Office.
- In-service hours will not be accepted. If you have completed course work and did not choose to receive CEU's, contact your trainer to see if CEU's were available. A fee may be required to complete this.
- Due to the variety of classes and course work for professional education in Early Childhood and Child Development, the Child Care Program Office does not provide a list of training that meets the requirement. Contact any of the following entities in your area to inquiry about availability.
  - Local Early Learning Coalition (<http://www.floridajobs.org/onestop/el/elcoalition.asp>);
  - Local Resource and Referral Agency (<http://www.flchild.com/findingchildcare.htm>);
  - Community College (<http://www.fldoe.org/cc/colleges.asp>);
  - University ([http://www.fldcu.org/univ\\_info/default.asp](http://www.fldcu.org/univ_info/default.asp));
  - Vocational Technical School ([http://www.firn.edu/doe/workforce/vtc3\\_95.htm](http://www.firn.edu/doe/workforce/vtc3_95.htm));
  - Florida Children's Forum (<http://www.flchild.com>);
  - IACET for a list of approved CEU providers (<http://www.iacet.org/>); or
  - Institutions licensed by the Florida Commission for Independent Education (<http://www.firn.edu/doe/cie/>).

If we were unable to answer your question, please feel free to contact us toll free or e-mail us your questions. We look forward to serving you.

Child Care Information

For more information, please contact:  
Child Care Training Information Center (CCTIC)  
2807 Remington Green Circle  
Tallahassee, FL 32308  
Telephone: 1-888-FL-CCTIC (1-888-352-2842)  
Email: [Child Care Training Information Center \(CCTIC\)](#)