



**COLORADO**

**Office of Behavioral Health**

Department of Human Services

**Certified Addiction Counselor  
Clinical Training Program**

**Handbook for Addiction  
Counselors (CAC/LAC)**



# CAC Handbook for Addiction Counselors

## Revised July 1, 2015

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Welcome to the CAC/LAC Handbook for Addiction Counselors developed by the Office of Behavioral Health CAC Clinical Training Program to help guide individuals interested in obtaining an addiction counselor credential in Colorado. This Handbook is designed to be used in conjunction with the OBH Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules, 2 CCR 502-1, 21.330, effective 11/1/2013, for an understanding of the certification and licensure process. It is the individual's responsibility to access and review the laws and rules for Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure. Please be sure you are looking at the most recent version of this handbook.

## Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules Information

The Colorado Department of Human Services approved and adopted the revised Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules (CAC Rules) effective November 1, 2013. A copy of these rules can be found on the OBH website: [www.colorado.gov/cdhs/dbh](http://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/dbh). Click on Workforce Development, then CAC Clinical Training Program for all related information.

The CAC Rules establish a standard of excellence in training addiction counselors in Colorado to include:

- Clarification of the core competencies expected of addiction counselors
- Prerequisites for specific required training classes
- Education requirements for each certification level
- Increased emphasis on clinical supervision preparation and practice
- National examination requirements for CAC II, CAC III and LAC
- Five-year limit on training classes
- Five-year limit on national exam
- A simplified pathway for individuals who hold a clinical Masters or Doctorate degree and wish to acquire an addiction credential.

The CAC Clinical Training Program is designed to train addiction counselors to work effectively within a variety of treatment settings and with a variety of addictive behaviors. The required training classes for certification have been updated and realigned. All required trainings are expected to incorporate evidence-based science-driven practices currently being utilized in the addiction treatment field. If prerequisites are required, every student will be required to present certificates or transcripts as proof of having taken the prerequisite.



## **Addiction Counseling in Colorado**

Certified and licensed addiction counselors possess a body of knowledge, skills, training and work experience in the treatment of addictive behaviors that distinguishes the addiction counseling profession from other health care professions. Preparation for a career as an addiction professional is available through OBH approved training and academic classes; skills development; clinically supervised work experience; and demonstration of knowledge by passing the required NAADAC exam. The potential applicant will need to access information from both the DORA and the OBH websites to create a career development plan.

## **Certification**

Counselor certification is available to those individuals with various levels of academic preparation in the counseling field and is comprised of three levels:

- Certified Addiction Counselor Level I (CAC I) is defined as an entry-level certification.
- Certified Addiction Counselor Level II (CAC II) is defined as a counselor who may conduct addiction treatment services independently and may perform the complete range of duties associated with addiction treatment, with the exception of clinical supervision.
- Certified Addiction Counselor Level III (CAC III) has the authority to practice independently and assume clinical supervision duties.

## **Licensure**

A Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) is a credentialing level that requires a **clinical** Master's degree, proof of passing the NAADAC MAC exam, and completion of all requirements for a CAC III.



**Colorado Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)  
Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA)  
NAADAC: The Association for Addiction Professionals  
Colorado Association of Addiction Professionals (CAAP)**

## **OBH**

The Colorado Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) is located in the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). OBH is responsible for the management and oversight of the Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC) Clinical Training Program and establishes the education, training, supervised work experience standards and requirements for the addiction professional workforce. <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHSBehavioralHealth/CBON/1251578892077>

## **DORA**

The Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) is the state agency that regulates the behavioral health professions in Colorado and is responsible for the registration, certification and licensure of addiction counselors. DORA establishes fees, evaluates the qualifications of applicants; approves certification and licensure for qualified practitioners; and investigates grievances against mental health professionals. <http://cdn.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?c=Page&childpagename=DORA/DORALayout&cid=1249686120221&pagename=CBONWrapper>

## **NAADAC**

NAADAC is the Association that advocates for addiction counseling professionals and service providers nationally and internationally. NAADAC's Mission "is to lead, unify and empower addiction focused professionals to achieve excellence through education, advocacy, knowledge, standards of practice, ethics, professional development and research." NAADAC has thousands of members and state affiliates in most states, provides relevant membership benefits, publishes the magazine "Addiction Professional" and the newsletter "NAADAC News." NAADAC offers national credentialing for addiction services providers (see below for details) and develops national examinations that can be used by any state as a requirement for state certification or licensure as is the case in Colorado. [www.naadac.org](http://www.naadac.org)

## **CAAP**

CAAP is the Colorado state affiliate of NAADAC. CAAP is also known as the Society of Addiction Counselors of Colorado (SACC). CAAP represents the addiction counseling workforce in Colorado and is committed to offering its members many benefits, including educational opportunities and training and increased professional standing via representation at the local, state and national levels. Membership in NAADAC automatically confers membership in CAAP. [www.caap.us](http://www.caap.us)



## Pathways to Certification and Licensure

Certification and/or licensure for Addiction Counseling requires:

- Clinically Supervised Work Experience
- Addiction Specific Training and Education
- Proof of passing the designated NAADAC National Examination.

### Pathway 1:

Those individuals who hold a High School diploma or equivalent are eligible to obtain a CAC I or CAC II; and those who hold a Bachelor's degree in the behavioral health sciences are eligible to obtain a CAC III.

- **CAC I** (Certified Addiction Counselor, Level I) is considered entry-level. Individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent may obtain their CAC I by completing the required OBH approved training classes, and obtaining 1,000 hours of clinically supervised work experience.
- **CAC II** (Certified Addiction Counselor, Level II) allows the counselor to practice addiction treatment services independently (with the exception of clinical supervision). Individuals with a High School diploma or equivalent are eligible to obtain a CAC II. The applicant must first obtain a CAC I or meet all the requirements for a CAC I, complete the required number of clinically supervised work experience hours, successfully pass the CAC II required training classes, and present proof of passing a national examination. The CAC II applicant should obtain at least 1000 hours of clinically supervised work experience in the practice of psychotherapy (right hand box of Work Verification Form) beyond the hours earned for the CAC I to demonstrate their ability to practice psychotherapy independently as a CAC II.
- **CAC III** (Certified Addiction Counselor, Level III) is the supervisory level. A Bachelor's degree in the behavioral health sciences is required. The CAC II must be awarded by DORA before an applicant is eligible to apply for a CAC III. The applicant for a CAC III must complete the required number of clinically supervised work experience hours, successfully pass the CAC III required training classes, and present proof of passing a national examination.

### Pathway 2:

Counselors currently holding a **clinical** Master's or Doctorate behavioral health degree may obtain the CAC II or LAC after completion of appropriately supervised clinical work experience hours, OBH approved training classes (or the equivalent, or a combination thereof) and proof of passing the NAADAC Master Addiction Counselor (MAC) exam. (See pages 23, 24, 25)



## Information every CAC applicant needs to know:

### Training Class Time Limit: Five-Year Rule Clarification

- All required class training certificates must be submitted to DORA within five (5) years of the date of receipt or they will not be accepted by DORA.

*Example: Applicant takes a class on 01-15-2011 and submits an application to DORA on 07-01-2016. This class is beyond the five-year limit and is therefore invalid. However the applicant has one year following submission of the application in which to take the appropriate class to correct the application.*

Certificates of training for Differential Assessment and Treatment Planning if dated prior to 03-01-11 will be accepted by DORA to count for Clinical Assessment and Treatment Planning if submitted within the five-year limit.

Certificates of training for the two-day Motivational Interviewing class if dated prior to 03-01-11 will be accepted by DORA if submitted within the five-year limit.

- These classes with a name change will be accepted by DORA if submitted within the five-year limit:
  - ▶ Old name: Infectious Diseases in the Alcohol & Drug Treatment Setting
  - ▶ New name: Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment
  
  - ▶ Old name: Diversity in Treatment Populations
  - ▶ New name: Culturally Informed Treatment.
  
  - ▶ Old name: Ethical Issues in the Alcohol & Drug Clinical Setting
  - ▶ New name: Professional Ethics I: Ethics & Jurisprudence.

### National Examination Time Limit

- A national examination taken and passed has an expiration date of five (5) years prior to the received date of application to DORA.

### Prerequisites for Classes

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure prerequisites are met before enrolling in any course. Courses requiring prerequisites are:

- **Professional Ethics II** (prerequisite is Professional Ethics I for Bachelor's-level and below, no prerequisite for Master's and Doctorate level)
- **Motivational Interviewing** (prerequisite is Addiction Counseling Skills for Bachelor's level and below, no prerequisite for Master's and Doctorate level)
- **Pharmacology II** (prerequisite is Pharmacology I for all education levels)
- **Clinical Assessment & Treatment Planning** (prerequisite is Client Record Management for Bachelor's level and below)



- **Advanced Motivational Interviewing** (prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing for all education levels) Clinical Supervision II (prerequisites are Advanced Motivational Interviewing and Clinical Supervision I for all education levels)

### Legal name and registration for courses

- An individual shall verify that the certificates, registrations and applications have their legal name to assure consistency. Following this procedure avoids possible rejection of an application by DORA due to the use of nicknames, partial names, initials, etc.

### Degree Evaluation:

- **Bachelor's Degree:** Submission of a Bachelor's degree for certification at a CACIII level must be in the human services field with associated coursework related to diagnosis, treatment planning, assessment, and counseling theories. Generally a human services, social work, or psychology degree will contain these elements but a sociology, nursing, or criminal justice degree will not. If you believe your degree qualifies, further information will be required of you, which may include an Educational Equivalency review. This will likely extend the review time needed for your application.
- **Master's Degree or Doctorate:** Submission of a clinical behavioral health Master's degree or Doctorate is required. Appropriate degrees include: social work, professional counseling, marriage & family counseling, addiction counseling, community counseling and clinical or counseling psychology. Third party payers, licensure and certification boards, and regulatory organizations require degrees that have counseling courses specific to assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, treatment, theories, skills, practicum, internship, etc. If you have a different degree but believe it meets the criteria, further information will be required of you, which may include an Educational Equivalency review. This will likely extend the review time needed for your application.
- An applicant who has a **clinical** Master's or Doctorate degree and wants to apply directly for an LAC (no prior certification awarded) must complete all requirements for the CAC III and submit to DORA.





## Work Verification Form and Documentation of Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours

- Work experience hours shall be documented using the Work Verification Form (WVF) within the CAC application found on the DORA website. The WVF may be removed from the application and duplicated as needed. It is strongly recommended that the counselor-in-training have a WVF signed periodically, but no less that quarterly, by the clinical supervisor that includes the **time frame, number of hours worked and numbers of hours of clinical supervision provided monthly**. The supervisee and the supervisor are responsible for keeping complete supervision records. Be aware **that no more than 200 hours of work experience total will be accepted by DORA in any one-month period**. (Be mindful of this when there is more than one clinical supervisor within the same time periods).
- When submitting your CAC application to DORA, all work experience hours that have been provided by each respective supervisor must be consolidated on one WVF signed by that supervisor. The applicant is responsible for verifying actual work experience hours to the supervisor's satisfaction. The clinical supervisor will complete the WVF and sign it. Please contact DORA for direction if you are unable to obtain the signature of a clinical supervisor of record on the consolidated Work Verification Form (WVF).
- The clinical supervisor(s) verifying work experience hours and supervision of an applicant must have personally provided the supervision hours documented on the WVF. Administrative supervisors may not provide nor sign for clinical supervision hours.
- Original signatures on the WVF are required. Copies will not be accepted by DORA. Signatures cannot be dated prior to the last date of work experience obtained or supervision provided.

### Work Experience Hours Completed at Time of Application (applicant completed High School/GED or Bachelor's):

- CAC I - 1,000 hours of work experience clinically supervised by a CAC III or LAC that cannot be completed in fewer than six months.
- CAC II - 2,000 hours of work experience in addition to the CAC I clinically supervised by a CAC III or LAC that cannot be completed in fewer than twelve months. (This amounts to a total of 3,000 hours of work experience.)
- CAC III - 2,000 hours of work experience in addition to the CAC II clinically supervised by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* that cannot be completed in fewer than twelve months. (This amounts to a total of 5,000 hours of work experience.)

\* See definition of other qualified supervisor on page 11.

Note: Individuals accumulating work experience hours toward a CAC II must be properly listed and regulated by DORA in order for those hours to count. See page 14, DORA Requirements for Listing.



## Clinical Supervision in CAC Rules (21.330.7)

The OBH Rules and Regulations, 2 CCR 502-1, Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules (21.330, eff. 11-01-2013) outline the requirements for the CAC III or LAC providing clinical supervision. The rules serve as a guide for the clinical supervisor in structuring and providing clinical supervision. All supervisors are responsible for maintaining a supervision log or record and providing copies of supervision records to their supervisees. In addition, the supervisee is responsible for making sure that the Work Verification Form (WVF) is filled out accurately and signed by the supervisor on a regular basis. The supervisee keeps all originals of the Work Verification Forms in order to submit with their certification applications. Anyone who becomes aware of a CAC III or LAC clinical supervisor who is signing off on supervision hours that were not provided by that same person and that may result in a fraudulent application being submitted to DORA, should report this violation to DORA. Here is the specific wording on the WVF relevant to the clinical supervisor:

*I affirm that the experience and supervision I have described on this form was conducted and completed in accordance with Title 12, Article 43, Colorado Revised Statutes and Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Standards. I further affirm that the supervisee's work towards the hours of experience, was conducted and completed under my supervision, and has met the generally accepted standards of practice. I declare under penalty of perjury in the second degree that the statements made in this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. In accordance with C.R.S. 18-8-501(2)(a)(I), false statements made herein are punishable by law and may constitute violation of the practice act.*

### **The following is an excerpt from the OBH CAC Clinical Supervision Rules, 21.330.41, Clinically Supervised Work Experience:**

“Clinically supervised work experience” is defined as paid or unpaid addiction specific counseling. Addiction counseling work experience does not have to be acquired in a substance use disorder treatment program licensed by the OBH, however it shall meet the criteria as stated in Sections 21.330.5, 21.330.6, and 21.330.7.

- A. Clinical supervision of work experience hours shall be provided by a CAC III or LAC in accordance with Section 21.330.7. Supervision for a CAC II or CAC III may also be provided by a qualified individual with education, training, and work experience in addiction counseling as determined by the OBH and licensure and certification boards.
- B. Counselors-in-training who are accumulating the first 1,000 clinically supervised work experience hours towards a CAC I shall be observed while providing addiction counseling a minimum of one time per month by their clinical supervisor of record and shall be documented by the supervisor.
- C. A counselor-in-training or the holder of a CAC I who is accumulating 2,000 clinically supervised work experience hours towards a CAC II shall be observed a minimum of one time per quarter (4x/yr) by their clinical supervisor of record and shall be documented by the supervisor.

A counselor-in-training or the holder of a CAC II who is accumulating 2,000 clinically supervised work experience hours towards a CAC III shall be observed a minimum of



two times per year by their clinical supervisor of record and shall be documented by the supervisor.

- D. Clinically supervised work experience hours may only be accumulated when an individual is working in the addiction treatment field and is at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- E. Individuals may accumulate clinically supervised work experience hours while receiving maintenance treatment for a substance use disorder or process addiction provided all other requirements of these rules are met.
- F. Individuals may not accumulate clinically supervised work experience hours while at the same time receiving primary treatment for substance use disorders or process addictions as this is considered a conflict of interest.
- G. Clinically supervised work experience hours may be accumulated while an individual is on probation or parole provided all other requirements of these rules are met. However, no applications for a CAC I, CAC II, CAC III or LAC shall be submitted to DORA while the applicant is on probation or parole as this is considered to be a conflict of interest.

### **Clinical Supervision Required**

Clinical supervision hours may be prorated based on number of hours worked each month, but no less that one hour per month may be provided for the work experience hours to count towards certification.

For those individuals who hold a **High School degree or the equivalent**:

- Working toward applying for a CAC I or already awarded a CAC I: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III or LAC only at a minimum of three hours per month for full time work.
- Working toward applying for a CAC II: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III or LAC only at a minimum of three hours per month for full time work.
- Already awarded CAC II: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* for two hours per month for full time work.

For those individuals who hold a **Behavioral Health Bachelor's degree**:

- Working toward applying for a CAC II: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III or LAC only at a minimum of three hours per month for full time work.
- Already awarded CAC II: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* for two hours per month for full time work.



- Working toward applying for a CAC III with already awarded CAC II: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* at a minimum of two hours per month for full time work.
- Already awarded CAC III: One hour of documented consultation per month when working in the field. (per OBH Rules and Regulations, 2 CCR 502-1).

For those individuals who hold a clinical Master's or Doctorate degree:

- Already awarded clinical Master's or Doctorate degree and working toward a CAC II or CAC III: Direct clinical supervision by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* at a minimum of two hours monthly for full time work.

\*Other qualified supervisor means a behavioral health professional with demonstrated competence equivalent to a CAC III or LAC in addiction treatment by education and experience, clinical Master's degree or above, and documented minimum of 3,000 hours of addiction counseling work experience.

*For further information regarding work experience hours and clinical supervision, refer to the Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules in the Office of Behavioral Health Consolidated Rules, 2 CCR 502-1, section 21.300.1 - 21.330.92 (eff. 11-01-2013).*



## National Examinations Required for CAC II, CAC III and LAC Applicants

All applicants for a CAC II, CAC III and LAC under the Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules (eff. 11-01-2013) are required to take and pass a NAADAC national examination approved by OBH. Proof of passing the exam must be submitted to DORA with the certification/licensure application. The examination must be taken within five years prior to submission of an application.

### NAADAC Examinations

OBH endorses the use of three examinations sponsored by NAADAC:

- NCAC I: National Certified Addiction Counselor, Level I  
(used for CAC II requirement)
- NCAC II: National Certified Addiction Counselor, Level II  
(used for CAC III requirement)
- MAC: Master Addiction Counselor (Master's level only)  
(used for LAC requirement)

CAAP's website, [www.caap.us](http://www.caap.us), has options for preparing for the national exams to include in-person workshops, online classes, and study guides that may be purchased. To take one of the national exams, register and make payment through CAAP on their website.

### Recommendations:

- Those individuals without a **clinical** Master's degree may consider taking either the NCAC I (with high school diploma) or the NCAC II (with a Bachelor's degree).
- Those individuals who have graduated with a **clinical** Master's degree or above should take the MAC regardless of whether they apply for a CAC II, CAC III or LAC.
- Selection of which national examination should be taken depends on the applicant's professional development plan, level of academic degree, and long-term career goals.

*Reminder: There is no national credential awarded or needed when applying to take one of these NAADAC sponsored exams. Successfully passing the required examination for State of Colorado requirements does not constitute national certification from NAADAC.*



## DORA Database Listing Requirements for Addiction Counselors

The Colorado Mental Health Practice Act is the law that regulates and defines the practice of psychotherapy in Colorado. The law states that all persons who engage in activities that meet the psychotherapy practice definition must be regulated by the DORA. Regulation means listing in the Board of Registered Psychotherapists as a registered psychotherapist **OR** holding a Colorado clinical behavioral health credential awarded by DORA, either by certification or licensure.

Certified Addiction Counselor Level I (CAC I) is an entry-level gateway for the addiction professional's career path. The initial 1,000 hours of verified work experience for a Level I may not involve psychotherapy activities as defined in the Mental Health Practice Act, and therefore may not require registration. However, if the initial 1,000 hours include psychotherapy activities the applicant must be registered in the DORA Registered Psychotherapist (RP) database in order to receive work experience credit and be compliant with the Mental Health Practice Act. If an individual plans to accrue hours for a Level II certification (CAC II) without first achieving a level I (CAC I), then registration in the DORA database as a RP is required to be compliant.

**Exemptions:** Pursuant to § 12-43-215(8), C.R.S., employees of community mental health centers are exempted from the database registration requirement. More information is available at [www.dora.colorado.gov/professions/registeredpsychotherapists](http://www.dora.colorado.gov/professions/registeredpsychotherapists).

If the counselor-in-training has completed 1000 hours of work experience **AND** has completed all of the required training classes for a CAC I, it is recommended they apply for their CAC I.

**Remember:** At any point in time when an individual engages in activities that meet the definition of psychotherapy practice, regardless of status, they must be listed and regulated by DORA.



## Online Jurisprudence Exam

All original applications submitted to DORA must be accompanied by the “passing results report” of the most recent version of the **Online Jurisprudence exam** located on DORA’s website. Individuals renewing a certification/license are not required to take the online jurisprudence exam, but any credential upgrade must be accompanied by the online “passing results report.”

Test items are weighted according to DORA’s rating of importance. Test results are calculated and reported on a scale of 200 to 800. A minimum scaled score of 500 is needed to pass. Below are the proportion of exam points possible by content area:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. General Mental Health Statutes (21%)   | 4. Board Rules (19%)                         |
| 2. Confidentiality and Privilege (15%)    | 5. Emergency Procedures (9%)                 |
| 3. Prohibited Activities/Violations (25%) | 6. Disciplinary Provisions/Proceedings (11%) |

### **The following is a general list of documents that may assist with the online jurisprudence exam:**

- Online Jurisprudence Exam Information (DORA)
- Online Test User Guide (DORA)
- Colorado Mental Health Practice Act (07-2011)
- OBH Rules and Regulations, 2 CCR 502-1, Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure (21.300.1 - 21.330.92) (effective 11-2013)
- DORA Addiction Counselor Rules for Certification and Licensure (eff. 03-2012)
- State Board of Addiction Counselor Examiners Policies
- Addiction Counselor Board Rules (2011)
- Registered Psychotherapists Rules and Regulations (02-2012)
- Mandatory Disclosure Form (DORA, 12-2011)
- Consent for Release (Basic)
- Consent for Release (Criminal Justice)
- NAADAC Code of Ethics (01-2011)
- NAADAC Code of Ethics Brochure (01-2011)
- Reporting Suspected Child Abuse (CRS § 19-3-304)
- Healthcare Professions Profile Director Rule 1 (07-2011)
- Michael Skolnik Medical Transparency Act (§ 24-34-110)
- M-1 Emergency Mental Illness Report (§ 27-65-105)

*DORA website:*

<http://cdn.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?c=Page&childpagename=DORA/DORALayout&cid=1249686120221&pagename=CBONWrapper>

*The Mental Health Practice Act can be found in the Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 12, Article 43.*

<http://cdn.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/DORA-Reg/CBON/DORA/1251632085774>

*Additional information available on the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) website:*

<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?c=Page&childpagename=CDHS-BehavioralHealth%2FCBONLayout&cid=1251581822229&pagename=CBONWrapper>



## Training Requirements for CAC I, II, III

CAC I <u>High school diploma/GED</u>	CAC II <u>High school diploma/GED</u> <i>CAC I training plus:</i>	CAC III <u>Bachelors Degree in a Behavioral Health Science</u> <i>CAC II Certification plus:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)</li> <li>• Client Record Management (14 hrs)</li> <li>• Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)</li> <li>• Professional Ethics I: Ethics and Jurisprudence (14 hrs)</li> <li>• Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)</li> <li>• Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)</li> <li>• Pharmacology I (14 hrs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Ethics II (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite is Professional Ethics I</i></li> <li>• Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisite is Addiction Counseling Skills</i></li> <li>• Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (14 hrs)</li> <li>• Group Counseling Skills (21 hrs)</li> <li>• Pharmacology II (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite is Pharmacology I</i></li> <li>• Clinical Assessment &amp; Treatment Planning (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite is Client Record Management</i></li> <li>• Co-occurring Disorders (14 hrs)</li> <li>• Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs)</li> <li>• Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing</i></li> <li>• Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisites: Advanced Motivational Interviewing &amp; Clinical Supervision I</i></li> <li>• Professional Practice (7 hrs)</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Total training hours = 112</u></b> 1,000 hours of clinically supervised work experience</p> <p>3 hrs of clinical supervision* per month for full time work</p>	<p><b><u>Total training hours = 126</u></b> Additional 2,000 hours of clinically supervised work experience (beyond CAC I requirement) for a total of 3,000 hours</p> <p>3 hrs of clinical supervision* per month for full time work</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>National Examination</b></p>	<p><b><u>Total training hours = 56</u></b> Additional 2,000 hours of clinically supervised work experience (<i>beyond CAC II requirement</i>) for a total of 5,000 hours</p> <p>2 hrs of clinical supervision* per month for full time work</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>National Examination</b></p>

*\*Three (3) hours of clinical supervision per month is required until the CAC II is awarded, then two (2) hours per month until the CAC III is awarded, and then one hour of consultation monthly. For less than full time work, supervision may be prorated but must be no less than one hour per month.*





## CAC Certification Tracking Sheet

**For those individuals who hold a High School diploma or equivalent AND those who hold a Behavioral Health Bachelor's degree.**

Requirements for Certification		Date Completed
<b>CAC I</b>		
	Addiction Counseling Skills (21 Hrs.)	
	Client Record Management (14 Hrs.)	
	Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 Hrs.)	
	Professional Ethics I: Ethics and Jurisprudence (14 Hrs.)	
	Culturally Informed Treatment (14 Hrs.)	
	Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 Hrs.)	
	Pharmacology I (14 Hrs.)	
	1000 Clinically supervised work experience hours	
<b>CAC II</b>	All of the above plus:	
	Professional Ethics II (14 Hrs.)	
	Motivational Interviewing (21 Hrs.)	
	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (14 Hrs.)	
	Group Counseling Skills (21 Hrs.)	
	Pharmacology II (14 Hrs.)	
	Clinical Assessment and Treatment Planning (14 Hrs.)	
	Co-occurring Disorders (14 Hrs.)	
	Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 Hrs.)	
	NAADAC Exam--NCAC I recommended with high school degree	
	2000 Clinically supervised work experience hours for a total of 3000 hours	
<b>CAC III</b>	All of the above plus:	
	Clinical Supervision I (21 Hrs.)	
	Clinical Supervision II (14 Hrs.)	
	Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 Hrs.)	
	Professional Practice (7 Hrs.)	
	Bachelor's degree in behavioral health science	
	NAADAC Exam--NCAC II recommended for Bachelors level	
	2000 Clinically supervised work experience hours for a total of 5000 hours	

*\*Note: This form for personal use only, do not submit to DORA.*



## Requirements for CAC II for Those Who Hold a Clinical Master's or Doctorate Degree

### Training:

Documentation of successful completion of the following OBH approved required training or its equivalent that must be completed within five (5) years prior to submitting an application to DORA:

- Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 clock hours)
- Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 clock hours)
- Pharmacology I (14 clock hours)
- Pharmacology II (14 clock hours) (*Prerequisite is Pharmacology I*)
- Motivational Interviewing (21 clock hours)
- Group Counseling Skills (21 clock hours)
- Professional Ethics II (14 clock hours)

### Clinically Supervised Work Experience:

Completion of 2,000 hours total of work experience in the addiction treatment field with direct clinical supervision by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* at a minimum of two hours per month for full time work.

### Passage of a national examination sponsored by NAADAC:

NCAC II is required but the MAC exam is recommended if you plan to continue on for an LAC.

\*Other qualified supervisor means a behavioral health professional with demonstrated competence equivalent to a CAC III or LAC in addiction treatment by education and experience, clinical Master's degree or above, and documented minimum of 3,000 hours of addiction counseling work experience.



## Requirements CAC III or Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) for Those Who Hold a Clinical Master's or Doctorate Degree

### Training:

Documentation of successful completion of the following OBH approved required training or its equivalent that must be completed within five (5) years prior to submitting an application to DORA:

- Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 clock hours)
- Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 clock hours)
- Pharmacology I (14 clock hours)
- Motivational Interviewing (21 clock hours)
- Group Counseling Skills (21 clock hours)
- Pharmacology II (14 clock hours)  
*(Prerequisite is Pharmacology I)*
- Professional Ethics II (14 clock hours)
- Clinical Supervision I (21 clock hours)
- Clinical Supervision II (14 clock hours)  
*(Prerequisite is both Advanced Motivational Interviewing and Clinical Supervision I)*
- Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 clock hours)  
*(Prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing)*

### Clinically Supervised Work Experience:

Completion of 3,000 hours total of work experience in the addiction treatment field with direct clinical supervision by a CAC III, LAC or other qualified supervisor\* at a minimum of two hours per month for full time work.

### Passage of a national examination sponsored by NAADAC:

The MAC exam is required for the LAC.

\*Other qualified supervisor means a behavioral health professional with demonstrated competence equivalent to a CAC III or LAC in addiction treatment by education and experience, clinical Master's degree or above, and documented minimum of 3,000 hours of addiction counseling work experience.



## Training Requirements Summary for CAC II, III & LAC for Those Who Hold a Clinical Master's or Doctorate Degree

CAC II <u>Training classes required with a clinical Masters or Doctorate degree</u>	CAC III <u>Training classes required with a clinical Masters or Doctorate degree</u>	LAC <u>Must have a clinical Masters or Doctorate degree</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hours)</li> <li>• Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hours)</li> <li>• Professional Ethics II (14 hours)</li> <li>• Pharmacology I (14 hours)</li> <li>• Pharmacology II (14 hours) <i>Prerequisite is Pharmacology I</i></li> <li>• Motivational Interviewing (21 hours)</li> <li>• Group Counseling Skills (21 hours)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hours)</li> <li>• Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hours)</li> <li>• Professional Ethics II (14 hours)</li> <li>• Pharmacology I (14 hours)</li> <li>• Pharmacology II (14 hours) <i>Prerequisite is Pharmacology I</i></li> <li>• Motivational Interviewing (14 hours)</li> <li>• Group Counseling Skills (21 hours)</li> <li>• Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hours) <i>Prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing</i></li> <li>• Clinical Supervision I (21 hours)</li> <li>• Clinical Supervision II (14 hours) <i>Prerequisites are Advanced Motivational Interviewing and Clinical Supervision I</i></li> </ul>	<p>Meet all requirements for the CAC III and passage of the MAC exam</p>
<p>2000 hours of clinically supervised work experience</p> <p>Two (2) hours of clinical supervision per month for full time work</p> <p>NCACII or MAC National examination</p>	<p>Additional 1000 hours for a total of 3000 hours clinically supervised work experience</p> <p>Two (2) hours of clinical supervision per month for full time work</p> <p>MAC National examination</p>	



## CAC II, CAC III and LAC Tracking Sheet for Those Who Hold a Clinical Master's or Doctorate Degree

Requirements for Certification		Date Completed
<b>CAC II</b>	When applying for a CAC II:	
	Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 Hrs.)	
	Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 Hrs.)	
	Pharmacology I (14 Hrs.)	
	Pharmacology II (14 Hrs.)	
	Motivational Interviewing (21 Hrs.)	
	Group Counseling Skills (21 Hrs.)	
	Professional Ethics II (14 Hrs.)	
	MAC exam recommended*	
	2000 Clinically supervised work experience hours	
	*If planning to apply for a LAC credential in future, the MAC will be required	
<b>CAC III</b>	When applying for a CAC III, all of the above plus:	
	Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 Hrs.)	
	Clinical Supervision I (21 Hrs.)	
	Clinical Supervision II (14 Hrs.) (Prerequisites are both Adv MI and Clinical Sup I)	
	MAC exam recommended*	
	3000 Clinically supervised work experience hours total	
	*If planning to apply for a LAC credential in future, the MAC will be required	
<b>LAC</b>	Meet requirements for CAC III above	
	Passage of the MAC exam	

*NAADAC requires that only those who hold a clinical Master's degree or above are eligible to sit for the Master Addiction Counselor (MAC) examination whether the exam is needed for a state requirement only or whether applying to NAADAC for a national credential.*

*\*Note: This form for personal use only, do not submit to DORA.*



## Education Equivalency for Addiction Counselor Certification

When an applicant submits college courses on an application to DORA in lieu of one of the required training classes, it is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate how their college course is equivalent to the OBH approved core competencies for that class. They are advised to compare the class syllabus to the core competency for the CAC required class. Anyone wishing to use college equivalents must submit the following to DORA:

- An official transcript from an accredited college or university in a sealed envelope. The courses must be in a behavioral health science or field. Each college class being offered as the equivalent of a CAC required class must have a grade of C or above.
- A cover letter with an attached syllabus and a written description about why the college class is equivalent to the CAC required class.
- A college course must offer college credits that are equivalent or greater than the number of clock hours required for the OBH training class.

### College equivalency hours:

- One semester credit hour = 15 clock hours
- Two semester credit hours = 30 clock hours
- Three semester credit hours = 45 clock hours
- One quarter credit hour = 8.5 clock hours
- Two quarter credit hours = 17 clock hours
- Three quarter credit hours = 25.5 clock hours

### CAC required classes that must be taken (No college course equivalency)

- Client Record Management, 14 hrs
- Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment, 14 hrs
- Pharmacology I, 14 hrs
- Pharmacology II, 14 hrs
- Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations, 14 hrs
- Clinical Supervision I, 21 hrs
- Clinical Supervision II, 14 hrs



**CAC required classes that may have college equivalency (See core competencies posted on the OBH website)**

- Addiction Counseling Skills, 21 hrs
- Principles of Addiction Treatment, 21 hrs
- Culturally Informed Treatment, 14 hrs
- Motivational Interviewing, 21 hrs
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, 14 hrs
- Professional Ethics I: Ethics and Jurisprudence, 14 hrs
- Professional Ethics II, 14 hrs
- Clinical Assessment and Treatment Planning, 14 hrs
- Co-Occurring Disorders, 14 hrs
- Group Counseling Skills, 21 hrs
- Advanced Motivational Interviewing, 14 hrs



## Course Descriptions of the Required CAC Clinical Training Program Classes

### Required classes for CAC I:

*Addiction Counseling Skills, Client Record Management, and Principles of Addiction Treatment* are the three classes that make up the Core Curriculum and are basic to the foundational training of a beginning addiction counselor.

- **Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hours)**  
Along with Principles of Addiction Treatment and Client Record Management, Addiction Counseling Skills is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of a Level I Certified Addiction Counselor. The purpose of this class is to provide a framework and counseling model for working with clients with substance use disorders. The overriding goal of this course is to teach the counseling skills needed to help clients process their information and move toward the change process. The models utilized in this class are client-centered and counselor-directed therapy using a motivational style and spirit. Videotaping and feedback will assist the participants in developing a standard level of counseling skills proficiency.
- **Client Record Management (14 hours)**  
This class is designed to provide the counselor with an understanding of the clinical record and the continuum of client care that the record documents and tracks. The class presents screening, basic assessment and evaluation, Substance Use Disorder diagnostic criteria, ASAM patient placement criteria, introduction to treatment planning, progress note completion, documentation requirements and basic referral and discharge planning. It emphasizes the confidentiality of the client record and includes releases of information, mandatory disclosure and informed consent among others. This class is a pre-requisite for Clinical Assessment and Treatment planning.
- **Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hours)**  
This class presents the models of addiction, defines and outlines various types of addiction treatment, presents the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) principles of effective treatment and reviews the use of evidence-based treatment approaches. The competencies required of an addiction counselor and scope of practice will be reviewed along with applicable rules and professional readiness.
- **Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hours)**  
This class emphasizes the higher risk of substance misuse with infectious diseases. Anyone who is abusing substances is at high risk for contracting and spreading infectious diseases. Understanding of diseases that might affect clients who are addicted to alcohol and other substances is a cornerstone of addiction counseling. The class will help prepare addiction professionals to screen and identify such diseases, determine client risk for infection, educate clients about disease prevention and treatment options, and assist clients in obtaining appropriate treatment as needed.
- **Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hours)**  
This class will provide a basic foundation for understanding how cultural competence, awareness, and sensitivity can improve quality of care and increase positive outcomes. The professional counselor has an obligation to understand the client’s context and





learn to communicate in a manner that the client is likely to be able to hear, understand and accept. The counselor must have the courage and insight to explore their own biases and misconceptions of others with cultural and ethnic differences. Cultural variables to be considered will include age, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, language, educational level, physical ability, economic status and social class as well as racial and ethnic backgrounds, all of which can be influential in the therapeutic process. Individual differences when considered in a cultural context can become strengths and resources for recovery.

- **Professional Ethics 1: Ethics and Jurisprudence (14 hours)**

This class will focus one day on ethical issues specific to the practice of addiction counseling and a second day focusing on jurisprudence, which is the law and the practice of psychotherapy in Colorado. The class will strengthen the knowledge of ethics and jurisprudence for the addiction counselor as this is essential for safe practice. The class will cover the Colorado Mental Health Practice Act that regulates the practice of psychotherapy in Colorado, and introduce the student to the regulatory system and role of DORA (Dept of Regulatory Agencies) and OBH (Office of Behavioral Health) in the development and credentialing of the addiction counselor. There will be an emphasis on developing ethical decision making skills, knowledge of confidentiality and the prohibited activities in the Mental Health Practice Act. The addiction counselor will become familiar with the NAADAC Code of Ethics and acquire the tools for ethical and legal practice

- **Pharmacology I (14 hours)**

Training in pharmacology is a cornerstone of addiction counseling and a major part of what differentiates the professional field of addiction counseling from other mental health disciplines. This class will provide a solid base of knowledge about the drugs of abuse including what is happening in human physiology and behaviors.

### Required classes for CAC II:

- **Clinical Assessment and Treatment Planning (14 hours)**

*(Prerequisite is Client Record Management)*

Client motivation and commitment to treatment begins with the assessment and diagnostic phase that typically occurs at intake. This course will consider the differences between screening and assessment and use of assessment instruments. The class will consider the components of the clinical assessment such as a biopsychosocial interview, assessing risk for self-harm, identifying cultural needs and supports, problem domains, determining stage of readiness for change and strengths of the client. Determining diagnosis utilizing the DSM 5 and resulting level of care for the client will be discussed using the ASAM PPC-2 (including the ASAM Criteria, 3rd ed). Stages of treatment and systems of care will be covered along with facets of treatment planning.

- **Motivational Interviewing (21 hours)**

*(Prerequisite is Addiction Counseling Skills)*

“Motivational interviewing is a client-centered collaborative style of conversation designed to strengthen a person’s motivation for and commitment to change. MI is counselor-guided in that the counselor is skilled at managing ambivalence, eliciting change-talk and honoring the client’s autonomy about taking the next step toward a



commonly agreed-upon goal” (Miller & Rollnick, 2010). Over 385 studies to date have demonstrated the effectiveness of the model at increasing client engagement, retention, compliance and improving treatment outcomes. The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) has identified MI as a best practice within the addiction treatment field. The CAC Clinical Training Program at the Colorado Office of Behavioral Health is committed to a process of integrating the Motivational Interviewing style, spirit and strategies into all levels of training and to support clinical supervision of motivational interviewing as a counseling style.

- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) (14 hours)**

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a treatment approach that has gained widespread application in the treatment of addictions and mental disorders. Several important features of CBT make it particularly promising as a treatment for substance abuse and dependence. CBT has been extensively researched and has solid empirical support as an evidence-based treatment for addictions. CBT is structured, goal-oriented, and focused on the immediate problems faced by substance abusers entering treatment who are struggling to control their substance use. It is a flexible, individualized approach that can be adapted to a wide range of clients and a wide range of treatment settings and formats. It works well with individuals as well as group therapy. Participants in this course will learn and practice effective ways to integrate tools specific to CBT in a comprehensive treatment strategy.

- **Co-Occurring Disorders (14 hour)**

This class presents the basics of working with clients with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. There is a growing need to recognize and address the interrelationship of these disorders, along with the medical implications for the client, through the use of specialized approaches and integration of treatment. This class will address clinical assessment, treatment philosophy, strategies, and guidelines to provide integrated treatment with co-occurring disorders. It will include an introduction to the DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for the mental disorders most often seen with substance use and behavioral addiction disorders, along with a discussion of the changes to substance use diagnoses with DSM-5. Additionally, the switch from ICD-9 to ICD-10 codes for substance use disorders and behavioral addictions will be discussed. The essential values, attitudes, and competencies of the counselor working with this population are discussed. Evidence based practices and models of integrated treatment are presented.

- **Group Counseling Skills (21 hours)**

Group therapy is a powerful tool in delivering addiction treatment services. Groups have many therapeutic elements and effects that draw people into the culture of recovery. Groups provide useful information, allow one or two therapists, depending on group size, to facilitate the group process which helps a number of clients simultaneously, and provides positive peer support and pressure for recovery. This class will help the aspiring addiction counselor to understand the use of group therapy in the addiction treatment field and be able to demonstrate the skills necessary to facilitate a therapy group. The class will focus on the group process and will discuss diversity within groups as well as the many challenges a group leader may face. The class will also present models of effective group practice.



- **Professional Ethics II (14 hours)**

*(Prerequisite is Professional Ethics I)*

This class will provide participants with a comprehensive overview of ethical and risk management issues related to addiction treatment services with a special emphasis on professional conduct and professional boundaries, to include boundary crossings and boundary violations. Dual relationships will be discussed within the context of clinical integrity and effectiveness. This class will focus on issues of professional distance, modeling and maintaining of healthy therapeutic boundaries and appropriate use of counselor self-disclosure. This class will also discuss standard of care as defined in statutes, licensing board regulations, case law, code of ethics of professional associations, and community norms. Guidelines for ethical risk management will be presented. The ethics of delivering professional counseling services to persons of culturally diverse backgrounds will be discussed along with issues pertaining to professional readiness and professional development.

- **Pharmacology II (14 hours)**

*(Prerequisite is Pharmacology I)*

Neuroscience and genetic research on addiction continues to make significant progress toward understanding the changes in the brain that underlie drug use and behaviors. The research has the potential to significantly affect both the way in which we think about addiction, and those that suffer from it. Addictive drugs have habit-forming actions that can be localized to a variety of brain regions that can activate the reward circuitry in the brain. This class will explore the neurobiological basis of addiction and how addictive drugs produce neurochemical changes in the brain's reward pathway. It will also explore new technologies for treatment and prevention based on brain science. Additionally, functional changes to the brain and the brain's ability to recover after exposure to drugs of abuse, medical problems associated with substance abuse, and the use of pharmacological assists in recovery will be discussed.

- **Trauma Informed Care with Diverse Populations (14 hours)**

This class will introduce the counselor to the concept of trauma-informed care, an approach that is being adopted more frequently within the human services fields based upon an increased awareness of the ways in which trauma impacts functioning. It will describe and define what trauma informed care is and ways in which a traditional treatment setting can be modified to increase the sense of safety experienced by clients. Participants will learn how to incorporate trauma-informed practices into treatment with diverse populations, such as military veterans, women, people with co-occurring disorders and other groups. Although trauma treatment approaches will be considered, this class will not teach how to do trauma specific treatment.

## **Required Classes for CAC III/LAC**

- **Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hours)**

*(Prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing)*

This two-day class of skill development in Advanced Motivational Interviewing will initially offer a brief review of the fundamental spirit, processes and skills of MI, and then focus intensively on clinical skills development. The training is designed to assist the counselor to develop and practice skills to assist clients to identify and strengthen intrinsic motivation for positive change. This is an advanced course in



Motivational Interviewing so it is expected that the participant will be able to demonstrate the foundational MI skills by conducting a client interview using the OARS + Informing and advising, and responding to no-change talk (Resistance or Sustaining). The format will be interactive and experiential in nature. Participants will be afforded an opportunity to obtain focused practice and will receive individualized feedback regarding their MI skills with student and trainer ratings. There will be a brief introduction to MIA-STEP, a format for use of MI as a supervisory tool.

- **Clinical Supervision I (21 hours)**

This training is designed to help a counselor learn the models of supervision and tools necessary to use as a standard of supervision practice. In this course the counselor will be exposed to supervision that is tailored to the supervisee's developmental level of experience. Ethical supervisory practices, including supervision contracts and work verification practices, will be discussed. Videotaping and feedback will assist the participant in developing a standard level of supervisory skills proficiency.

- **Clinical Supervision II (14 hours)**

*(Prerequisites are Advanced Motivational Interviewing & Clinical Supervision I)*

Clinical supervision II is designed to reinforce the motivational interviewing skills of the supervisor through the use of the MIA:STEP process. MIA:STEP (Motivational Interviewing Assessment: Supervisory Tools for Enhancing Proficiency) will be utilized as a format of supervision. Specialized techniques, coaching, coding, teaching, and use of video or audio taping in supervision will be discussed. Videotaping of practice sessions may be utilized.

- **Professional Practice (7 hours)**

This one-day training will discuss what it means to be a Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders Specialist (professional presentation and representation), organizational culture and agency practices including business practices, workplace practices, fee collection, staff training, policies and procedures and conflict of interest in business interests. Professional practice includes OBH Behavioral Health Rules, 2 CCR 502-1 (11-1-2013), and counselor licensing through DORA. OBH is responsible for licensing substance use (and addiction) disorder treatment programs and designating mental health treatment programs. OBH Behavioral Health Rules, 2 CCR 502-1 (11-1-2013) set treatment program rules, standards and guidelines that include maintenance of records, legal issues, personnel policies and disciplinary guidelines, reporting violations to DORA, vicarious and direct liability, and malpractice. Electronic health records and ethical management of electronic media will be reviewed as well as client record keeping on computers, passwords, encryption, protections and transportation of records. The use of cell phones, email and social media will be presented and a review of 42 CFR and HIPAA privacy standards and confidentiality. In the clinical realm, an overview of assessing for suicidal risk and supervision responsibilities, intern management, and professional services will be covered.

*See [www.colorado.gov/cdhs/dbh](http://www.colorado.gov/cdhs/dbh) (For Providers; Resources for Treatment Programs and MSO; Code of CO. Regulations - CDHS-OBH Behavioral Health Rules)*