



COLORADO

Behavioral Health
Administration

Addiction Counselor Clinical Training Program

**Handbook for
Addiction Counselors
effective June 2024**



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Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules

The Addiction Counselor Clinical Training Program Rules establish a standard of excellence in training addiction counselors in Colorado which include:

- Clarification of the core competencies expected of addiction counselors
- Prerequisites for specific required training classes
- Education requirements for each level
- Increased emphasis on clinical supervision preparation and practice
- National examination requirements for CAT, CAS and LAC
- Five-year limit on training classes
- Five-year limit on national exam

The Addiction Counselor 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. All required trainings are expected to incorporate evidence-based science-driven practices currently being utilized in the addiction treatment field. If prerequisites are required, individuals will be required to present transcripts as proof of having taken the prerequisite.

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) Rules for Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure are available on the Colorado Secretary of State website:

<https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/DisplayRule.do?action=ruleinfo&ruleId=2157&deptID=9&agencyID=70&deptName=Department%20of%20Human%20Services&agencyName=Behavioral%20Health&seriesNum=2%20CCR%20502-1>

<https://cdhs.colorado.gov/behavioral-health/laws-rules>

Certification and/or licensure for Addiction Counseling requires:

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



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 BHA 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:

DORA: (<https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor>

BHA: (<https://bha.colorado.gov/resources/cac-clinical-training-program>) to create a career development plan.

Certification

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

- **Certified Addiction Technician (CAT)** is a credentialing level that requires a high school diploma, proof of passing the NCAC I exam, and completion of all requirements at the CAT level. Individuals at the CAT level can not practice independently. A CAT is able to provide service coordination and case management, collect biopsychosocial screening data, monitor compliance with case management plans, provide skill based education, facilitate psychoeducational and therapy groups with appropriate training and clinical supervision, and referral and discharge planning.
- **Certified Addiction Specialist (CAS)** is a credentialing level that requires a behavioral health bachelor's degree, proof of passing the NCAC II exam, and completion of all requirements at the CAT and CAS level. Individuals at the CAS level are able to practice independently, treat substance misuse and co-occurring disorders, complete clinical assessments to include diagnostic impression, treatment planning, referral and discharge planning, service coordination and case management, and addiction counseling for individuals, families and groups. A CAS may provide clinical supervision for certification purposes to an individual working toward CAT or CAS.

Licensure

Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) is a credentialing level that requires a **clinical** behavioral health Master's degree, proof of passing the NAADAC MAC exam, 2000 clinically supervised addiction work experience hours, proof of passing the mental health jurisprudence exam and completion of seven (7) addiction trainings without educational equivalency (*see page 16 for list of required addiction trainings*). The scope of practice of a licensed addiction counselor includes behavioral health counseling and may include the treatment of substance use disorders, addictive behavioral disorders, and co-occurring mental health disorders, including clinical evaluation and diagnosis, treatment planning, service coordination, case management, clinical documentation, professional and ethical responsibilities, education and psycho-therapy with clients, family, and community, clinical supervisory responsibilities, and intervention. An Addiction Counselor Candidate is able to perform the duties of the LAC under supervision.



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

BHA

Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) is a cabinet member-led entity within the State of Colorado, housed within the Department of Human Services (CDHS), and is designed to be the single entity responsible for driving coordination and collaboration across state agencies to address behavioral health needs. BHA 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.

<https://bha.colorado.gov/resources/cac-clinical-training-program>

DORA

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.

<https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor>

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 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.

<https://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.

<https://www.caap.us/>



Information every Addiction Counselor applicant needs to know:

Legal name and registration for courses

An individual shall verify 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.

Training Class Time Limit: Five-Year Rule Clarification

All required CAC training courses must be submitted to DORA within **five (5) years** of the date of training. *For example, a training completed on April 1, 2020 would expire on April 1, 2025. If the required training expires prior to submitting an application to DORA, the applicant shall retake and complete the training again.*

*Individuals applying for a higher level of certification and/or licensure, having completed the coursework without educational equivalency from a BHA approved trainer, have a **five (5) year** expiration date. For example, an awarded CAT, applying for the LAC, must complete the 7 courses without educational equivalency within 5 years of applying for the LAC, or will need to retake the course.*

Course Attendance

All addiction counselor course work is to be completed by the participant in the time-frame of the course. If there is a lapse in class time, online or live, the participant will need to retake the course in its entirety. All virtual (Zoom etc) trainings are to be treated as in person and the participant is to be present the entire training (not working, not participating in other trainings at the same time, etc).

Prerequisites for Courses

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

- **Group Counseling Skills**
Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills
- **Motivational Interviewing**
Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills
- **Advanced Case Conceptualization**
Prerequisite: Case Conceptualization and Documentation
- **Advanced Motivational Interviewing**
Prerequisite: Motivational Interviewing
- **Advanced Pharmacology**
Prerequisite Pharmacology I
- **Clinical Supervision I**
Prerequisites: Addiction Counseling Skills, Group Counseling Skills, Motivational Interviewing, and Advanced Motivational Interviewing



- **Clinical Supervision II**
Prerequisite: Clinical Supervision I
- **Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice**
Prerequisite: Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment

An applicant who successfully completed the following courses **between 3-31-2016 and 3-31-2021** will have the courses accepted **without** the required prerequisite of Addiction Counseling Skills for CAT certification:

- Group Counseling Skills
- Motivational Interviewing

Individuals with an active CAS, who are pursuing licensure as an LAC, must successfully meet the following requirements:

- Pass the MAC exam
- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
- Completed a clinical behavioral health Master's or Doctorate degree
- Completion of seven (7) required addiction counselor trainings without educational equivalency (*see page 16 for list of required addiction trainings, CAC training courses have a five (5) year time limit*)
- Additional coursework is not required if the applicant earned their CAS prior to March 31, 2021.

Degree Evaluation:

- **Bachelor's Degree:** Submission of a Bachelor's degree for certification at a CAS level must be in a behavioral health sciences specialty, with a focus on psychological, behavioral, social and cultural factors, and applies knowledge and tools in behavioral theory, research, assessment, program planning, and counseling. 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 from the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) <https://www.cce-global.org/> 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: community counseling, human services counseling, marriage and family therapy, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, human psychology, clinical social work, psychiatric nursing/advanced practice nursing, and addictionologist - addiction medicine. 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 from the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) <https://www.cce-global.org/> This will likely extend the review time needed for your application.



LAC application with an active Master Addiction Counselor (MAC)

Individuals with an active Master Addiction Counselor (MAC) credential issued from NAADAC seeking the LAC, must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
- Complete the LAC application, uploading MAC credential and number
- Copy of letter/email from NAADAC indicating MAC credential is valid and the expiration date
- Taking the MAC exam is **not** required as the MAC credential is already awarded

CAS application with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor II (NCAC II)

Individuals with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor II (NCAC II) credential issued from NAADAC seeking the CAS, must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
- Complete the CAS application, uploading NCAC II credential and number
- Copy of letter/email from NAADAC indicating NCAC II credential is valid and the expiration date
- Taking the NCAC II exam is **not** required as the NCAC II credential is already awarded

CAT application with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor I (NCAC I)

Individuals with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor I (NCAC I) credential issued from NAADAC seeking the CAT, must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
- Complete the CAT application, uploading NCAC I credential and number
- Copy of letter/email from NAADAC indicating NCAC I credential is valid and the expiration date
- Taking the NCAC I exam is **not** required as the NCAC I credential is already awarded



Field Experience for Non-conforming Clinical Behavioral Health Master's Degrees: Eligible participants will complete a Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE) review for the confirmed Master's degree. If the determination is all areas of the Master's degree requirement are met, **EXCEPT** the internship/practicum requirement, the participant would provide a copy of the CCE letter to the CAC Clinical Training Program Manager.

Upon approval, the CAC Clinical Training Program Manager will provide the participant with a list of BHA Approved Clinical Supervisor for the Field Experience. The participant will have 12 months from the date of approval to complete the hours.

Internship/Practicum Hours Required: 100 hours practicum, 600 hours internship

- CAC Course to be completed with a BHA Approved Trainer (completion covers requirements for the 100 practicum hours).

The following CAC Courses can be completed concurrently with internship hours, and taken within six months prior to the application:

- ❖ Addiction Counseling Skills
 - ❖ Group Counseling Skills
 - ❖ Motivational Interviewing
- Internship: 600 hours clinically supervised work experience, with an on-site clinical supervisor for addiction treatment (LAC).

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Institutions of Higher Learning:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a written agreement between BHA and an Institution of Higher Learning indicating an established and approved addiction training curriculum is offered. A student completing and passing coursework under the established MOU will submit their transcript to DORA without having to register in the CERTS database or completing a CCE educational review. Students shall contact the Institution of Higher Learning to determine if there is an established MOU with BHA.



Certification Educational Requirements Tracking System (CERTS)

The Certification Educational Requirements Tracking System (CERTS) is an online software application contracted by the State of Colorado to track the successful completion of Addiction Counselor training courses. The CERTS maintains a transcript for every registered student.

As of January 1, 2018 all individuals seeking certification or licensure for addiction counseling are to be registered in CERTS and have a CERTS ID number entered into the student profile to get credit for any addiction courses attended and passed (this does not include courses on a college transcript).

To register with CERTS: <http://www.colorado-certs.com> and click the “Register” button.

CERTS Update as of April 1 2021

While previously CERTS utilized a per-certification-level fee structure, it now employs a per-course fee structure. Students purchase the specific courses that they need CERTS to track for them, so the overall cost of CERTS will depend on the students’ specific needs.

Students that registered prior to April 1, 2021, and are still in the process of pursuing certification, will need to convert the obsolete certification tracks to the new rules tracks for CERTS to track the correct course requirements. Students may use the “contact customer support” feature of CERTS for assistance.

** A student completing and passing coursework under an established MOU with an Institution of Higher Learning will submit their transcript to DORA without having to register in the CERTS database.*

Individuals with an active CAS, earned on or before March 31, 2021, are **not required to take additional addiction training(s) and do **not** need to register in the CERTS database.*



Clinically Supervised Addiction Work Experience Hours

- CAT - 1,000 hours of clinically supervised addiction work experience supervised by a CAS or LAC that cannot be completed in fewer than six months.
(Does not require DORA registration prior to the 1000 hours).
- CAS - 3,000 hours of clinically supervised addiction work experience supervised by a CAS or LAC that cannot be completed in fewer than eighteen months. This may include the hours required for certification as a CAT.
- LAC - 2,000 hours of clinically supervised addiction work experience by a LAC or other qualified supervisor.*
**Other qualified supervisor means a behavioral health professional with demonstrated competence equivalent to a LAC in addiction treatment by education and experience, clinical Master's degree or above, and documented minimum of 2,000 hours of addiction counseling work experience.*

NOTE: Experience and supervision requirements that were completed more than five (5) years before the date of the application with DORA, will not be accepted by the Board absent a showing of good cause, as determined by the Board.

Clinical Supervision Required

Credential Working Towards	High School/GED Completion: Hours per month** of Supervision Required	Bachelor's Degree conferred: Hours per month** of Supervision Required*	Master's Degree Conferred: Hours of Supervision Required*	Master's level students enrolled in an internship or practicum
CAT	3	3	n/a	n/a
CAS	n/a	3	2	2
LAC	n/a	n/a	2	2

* If degree is not yet conferred, supervision hours per month must equal 3 hours for full time work.

**See rules for prorating less than full-time work.



National Exam Requirement

All applicants for a CAT, CAS and LAC are required to take and pass a NAADAC national examination approved by the BHA. Proof of passing the exam must be submitted to DORA with the certification/licensure application. A national examination taken and passed has an expiration date of **five (5) years** prior to the received date of application to DORA.

NAADAC Examinations

The BHA endorses the use of three examinations sponsored by NAADAC:

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

CAAP's website, <https://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 who have graduated with a **clinical** Master's degree or above should take the MAC regardless of whether they apply for a CAS 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 holding a Colorado clinical behavioral health credential awarded by DORA, either by certification or licensure.

First 1000 hours:

- ✓ Individuals working towards CAT do not have to register with DORA prior to submission of application.
- ✓ Once the 1000 hours are met, the individual is not able to count hours towards CAS certification or facilitate psychoeducational groups independently until the CAT is officially approved

Addiction Counselor Candidate:

- ✓ **By Endorsement:** One year for candidate with an active addiction credential from another state to meet the requirements for level applying for (CAT, CAS or LAC)
- ✓ **Master's or Doctorate Student:** Four years to meet requirements for LAC (or be registered in another Mental Health category)

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 <https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/Laws>

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.



Requirements for Certified Addiction Technician (CAT)

<p>HS diploma/GED)</p>	<p>Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours: 1000 <i>(does not require DORA registration prior to the 1000 hours)</i></p> <p>Pass the NCAC I Exam</p> <p>Pass the Jurisprudence Exam https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/ApplicationsDocs</p> <p>Total training hours: 154</p>	<p>Nine (9) addiction specialty trainings: Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)</p> <p>Case Conceptualization & Documentation (14 hrs)</p> <p>Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)</p> <p>Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)</p> <p>Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)</p> <p>Pharmacology I (14 hrs)</p> <p>Trauma-Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)</p> <p>Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills</i></p> <p>Group Counseling Skills (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills</i></p>
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Requirements for Certified Addiction Specialist (Must be an awarded CAT*)

<p>Behavioral Health Bachelor Degree</p> <p><i>Non-conforming Bachelor's degree approval will be decided at the discretion of the Addiction Board</i></p>	<p>Approved to provide Clinical Supervision and consultation to individuals working towards CAT or CAS</p>	<p><i>Bachelor's degree or higher in Substance Use Disorders/Addiction and/or related counseling subjects (social work, mental health counseling, marriage & family, psychology, human services) from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.</i></p>
<p><i>*Must already be a CAT (or unlicensed psychotherapist, or registered in the DORA database with a behavioral health entity) before one can become a CAS.</i></p>	<p>Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 direct clinically supervised hours (may include the hours required for the CAT) <p>Pass the NCAC II exam</p> <p>Pass the jurisprudence exam https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/ApplicationsDocs</p> <p>Total Training Hours: 161</p>	<p>Eleven (11) specialty trainings:</p> <p>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (14 hrs)</p> <p>Co-occurring Disorders (14 hrs)</p> <p>Advanced Treatment Models (14 hrs)</p> <p>Treating Diverse Populations (14 hrs)</p> <p>Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14hrs)</p> <p>Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment</i></p> <p>Advanced Case Conceptualization (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Case Conceptualization and Documentation</i></p> <p>Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Pharmacology I</i></p> <p>Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Motivational Interviewing</i></p> <p>Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisites: Addiction Counseling Skills, Group Counseling Skills, Motivational Interviewing, and Advanced Motivational Interviewing</i></p> <p>Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisites: Advanced Motivational Interviewing and Clinical Supervision I</i></p>



Requirements for Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC)

<p>Clinical behavioral health Master or Doctorate degree</p> <p><i>Non-conforming Master's or Doctorate degree approval will be decided at the discretion of the Addiction Board</i></p>		<p><i>Clinical Behavioral Master's degree or higher in Substance Use Disorders/Addiction and/or related counseling subjects (social work, mental health counseling, marriage & family, psychology, medical doctor) from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.</i></p>
	<p>Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 direct clinically supervised hours <p>Pass the MAC exam</p> <p>Pass the jurisprudence exam https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/ApplicationsDocs</p> <p>Designated providers of Clinical Supervision for all levels of certification and licensure, in the addictions profession</p> <p>Total training hours: 112</p>	<p>Seven (7) speciality trainings: <i>(Must be taken by a BHA Approved Trainer, or under a MOU (see pg 9) CCE/educational equivalency not acceptable)</i></p> <p>Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)</p> <p>Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)</p> <p>Pharmacology I (14 hrs)</p> <p>Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Pharmacology I</i></p> <p>Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14 hrs)</p> <p>Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs)</p> <p>Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Clinical Supervision I</i></p>



Education Equivalency for Addiction Counselor Certification

When an applicant submits college courses on an application to the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) 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 BHA's 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 CCE (*please be advised this process can take 4-6 weeks*):

- 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 training 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 BHA training class.

Additional information is available on the CCE website:

<https://www.cce-global.org/businesssupportservices/licensureeducationreviews>

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 courses that must be taken by a BHA approved trainer (No college course equivalency):

- Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)
- Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)
- Pharmacology I (14 hrs)
- Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs)
- Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14 hrs)
- Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs)
- Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs)



**CAC required courses that may have college equivalency
(See core competencies posted on BHA website):**

<https://bha.colorado.gov/resources/cac-clinical-training-program>

(Click on Core Competencies for CAC Required Training Classes)

- Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)
- Case Conceptualization and Documentation (14 hrs)
- Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)
- Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)
- Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs)
- Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs)
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (14 hrs)
- Advanced Case Conceptualization (14 hrs)
- Co-Occurring Disorders (14 hrs)
- Group Counseling Skills (21 hrs)
- Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)
- Advanced Treatment Models (14 hrs)
- Treating Diverse Populations (14 hrs)



Course Descriptions of the Required CAC Clinical Training Program Courses

- **Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)**
Along with Principles of Addiction Treatment and Case Conceptualization and Documentation, Addiction Counseling Skills is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of an addiction counselor. The purpose of this training is to provide a framework and counseling model for working with clients with substance misuse and addiction. The focus of the training is to teach the counseling skills needed to assist individuals in processing their information and move toward the change process. The models utilized are client-centered, counselor-directed therapy along with motivational spirit of counseling. Recording and feedback will assist the participants in developing a standard level of counseling skills proficiency.
- **Advanced Case Conceptualization (14 hrs)**
(Prerequisite is Case Conceptualization and Documentation)
Client motivation and commitment to treatment begins with the assessment and diagnostic phase that typically occurs at intake. This training will consider the differences between screening and assessment and use of assessment instruments. The training 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 Criteria. Stages of treatment and systems of care will be covered along with facets of treatment planning.
- **Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs)**
(Prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing)
This training of skill development will initially offer a brief review of the fundamental spirit, processes and skills of MI, and then focus intensively on clinical skills development. 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, and responding to no-change talk (resistance). 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.
- **Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs)**
(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 training 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.



- **Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14 hrs)**
(Prerequisite is Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment)
This training addresses organizational ethics and practices, individual provider ethics and practices, and guidelines for setting up a private practice. Topics will include OBH licensing rules; OBH behavioral health rules and regulations; practice standards and guidelines; DORA and the Mental Health Practice Act; the purpose of and the need for written policies and procedures; professional competencies, boundaries and ethical relationships; reporting violations; employee drug testing; liability insurance; clinical versus administrative supervision; the ethical delivery of culturally-responsive care and trauma-informed care; and the need for a professional self-care plan.
- **Advanced Treatment Models (14 hrs)**
This training is designed to provide an overview of the specialized models of counseling for behavioral health environments that provide services to co-occurring mental health and addiction interventions. The purpose of this training is to provide information and instruction into those advanced models so that clinical supervisors will have the basic knowledge required to provide adequate support and supervision for these models. The focus of this training is to teach the structure, purpose, appropriate population, and practice details of each model that is covered in the training.
- **Case Conceptualization and Documentation (14 hrs)**
Along with Principles of Addiction Treatment and Addiction Counseling Skills, Case Conceptualization and Documentation, is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of an addiction counselor. This training 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 training 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.
- **Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs)**
(Prerequisites are Addiction Counseling Skills, Group Counseling Skills, Motivational Interviewing, Advanced Motivational Interviewing)
Clinical supervision is the process by which the clinical practice provided by the counselor is evaluated and either modified or approved by the supervisor. Clinical supervision is a central organizing activity that integrates the program mission, goals and treatment philosophy with clinical theory and evidence-based practices. This training prepares the addiction counselor with basic supervision tools and models to use as a standard of practice to include: models of supervision, counselor developmental level, cultural and contextual factors, ethical and legal issues, monitoring performance of the supervisee, methods of observation, practice issues in clinical supervision, and documentation issues.



- **Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs)**
(Prerequisites are Advanced Motivational Interviewing & Clinical Supervision I)
Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an evidence-based tool used intentionally along the entire continuum of care from prevention through recovery, in the work of substance use and process addictions. The key to supporting the consistent use of the Motivational Interviewing (MI) model in counseling and service provision is supervisory coaching and feedback. The aim of this training is to teach clinicians and other service providers who already have acquired MI skills, and who have or will have a supervisory role, how to observe and coach their supervisees in the proper application of these skills in a diverse and integrated care environment.
- **Co-Occurring Disorders (14 hrs)**
This training 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 training 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 diagnosis with DSM-5.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (14 hrs)**
Cognitive-behavioral therapy (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 misuse. It is a flexible, individualized approach that can be adapted to a wide range of individuals and a wide range of treatment settings and formats.
- **Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)**
This training 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 individual's context and learn to communicate in a manner that the individual is likely to be able to hear, understand and accept. The professional counselor must have the courage and insight to explore their 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.
- **Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)**
This training will focus on professional and ethical issues specific to the practice of addiction counseling and the treatment of co-occurring disorders. This training will build and strengthen the individual's knowledge of NAADAC's Code of Ethics, Federal and State rules and regulations that are essential for safe practice, Colorado Mental Health Practice Act including the prohibited activities, 42 CFR Part 2, and HIPAA that regulate the practice of psychotherapy including addiction counseling. Individuals



will learn about the important roles and activities of OBH (Office of Behavioral Health) and DORA (Department of Regulatory Agencies). In this training, individuals will learn the process of certification and credentialing to legally practice in Colorado, as well as the differences between privacy and confidentiality, and exceptions to confidentiality.

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

(Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills)

Group therapy is a powerful tool in delivering addiction treatment services, as individuals working on or in recovery provide support to one another. The training will assist the aspiring addiction counselor to understand models of effective group process, the use of group therapy, and be able to demonstrate the skills necessary to facilitate a group.

- **Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)**

Drug and alcohol abuse can increase an individual's susceptibility to contract and spread infectious diseases, including STDs and blood borne illnesses. Drug use is linked to risky behaviors such as needle sharing and unsafe sex and can also weaken the immune system. This training will assist addiction professionals to identify infectious diseases, determine individual risk for infection, educate individuals about disease prevention and treatment options, and assist individuals in obtaining appropriate treatment as needed.

- **Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs)**

(Prerequisite: 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, 2014). Motivational Interviewing is an evidenced-based counseling approach used to assist individuals to identify their readiness, willingness, and ability to make change. The MI approach to counseling is integrated into all levels of addiction training and to support clinical supervision of motivational interviewing as a counseling style.

- **Pharmacology I (14 hrs)**

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 training will provide a solid base of knowledge about the drugs of abuse including what is happening in human physiology and behaviors.

- **Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)**

Along with Addiction Counseling Skills and Case Conceptualization and Documentation, Principles of Addiction Treatment is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of an addiction counselor. This training 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.

- **Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)**
Trauma Informed Care is a treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. The clinical shift is from “what’s wrong with you” to “what happened to you.” This training will introduce the counselor to the concept of trauma-informed care, and define ways in which a traditional treatment setting can be modified to increase an individual’s sense of safety within this setting. Participants will learn how to incorporate trauma-informed practices into substance use disorder treatment with diverse populations, such as military veterans, gender specific, people with co-occurring disorders, persons involved in the criminal justice system, etc. Although trauma treatment approaches will be considered, this training will not teach how to do trauma specific treatment.
- **Treating Diverse Populations (14 hrs)**
Addiction counselors work to improve people’s lives by identifying and treating the effects of substance abuse disorders. Addiction counselors may work with people from the general public or they may specialize in specific populations, such as gender specific, persons involved in the criminal justice system, families, LGBTQIA, veterans and the opioid overuse epidemic. This training will provide a more in depth overview of the diverse populations in the addiction treatment realm.



Information for Addiction Counselors on group delineation of function and credential:

- **Support groups:** which buoy members and provide a forum to share pragmatic information about maintaining abstinence and managing day-to-day, chemical free life. **There is no therapy processing component in these groups.** (first person delivery)
- **Skills development groups:** which cultivate the skills needed to attain and sustain abstinence, such as those needed to manage anger or cope with urges to use substances. **There is no therapy processing component in these groups.** It is information and skills acquisition, development and mastery. (Need specific knowledge of skills being taught) **CAT, CAS, or LAC**
- **Psychoeducational groups:** which educate clients about substance abuse (used some process skills) and how it show up in their personal lives. **There is a limited therapy processing component in these groups.** Often curriculum/manual specific topic and direction (**CAT** with supervision and awareness of special training and or certification on specific topics or curriculum) **CAS, LAC**
- **Cognitive-behavioral groups:** which alter thoughts and actions that lead to substance abuse (**there is blending of process, skills and specific theory delivery**) **CAT** with specific training and supervision, **CAS, LAC**
- **Interpersonal process groups:** which delve into major developmental issues that contribute to addiction or interfere with recovery Interpersonal process group psychotherapy (referred to hereafter as “interpersonal process groups” or “therapy groups”), which enable clients to recreate their pasts in the here-and-now of group and rethink the relational and other life problems that they have previously fled by means of addictive substances. **There is no direct teaching, just processing in this group** (**CAS, LAC only, or CAT in co-facilitation with CAS or LAC**)