

Frequently asked questions: Child Care Staff Certification Changes

What are the current requirements for child care staff certification?

Under the Child Care Licensing Regulation, there are three levels of certification for child care workers. They are Child Development Assistant (CDA), Child Development Worker (CDW), and Child Development Supervisor (CDS). To learn about the qualification requirements for these certification levels, please visit alberta.ca and search for “child care certification”.

Educational credentials recognized as equivalent and completed in related subject areas can be accepted in place of the requirement.

What is changing with the educational equivalencies?

The educational equivalencies to be considered for certification as a CDW and CDS have been updated. There have been no changes to the educational equivalencies required for the CDA level certification.

What is changing with the language proficiency requirements?

To be considered for CDW and CDS certification, applicants will now be required to complete a language proficiency assessment if their post-secondary studies were completed in countries that do not provide instruction in English or French throughout all levels of schooling.

Which equivalencies are no longer accepted?

The following credentials will no longer be accepted as equivalencies for CDW certification:

- Arts (Psychology or Sociology) – Degree
- Science (Nursing) – Degree
- Licensed Practical Nurse (Alberta designation)
- Teaching – Diploma or Degree
- Medicine – Degree
- Pediatrics – Degree
- Fine Arts (with Early Childhood Education coursework) – Degree
- School-Age Care – Certificate

The following credentials will no longer be accepted for educational equivalency for CDS certification:

- Home Science (Child Development) – Degree
- Science (Education) – Degree
- 3-year Education degree and 1-year Education after-degree

Why are the educational equivalencies being revised?

Although applicants with previously recognized equivalent credentials are well educated, changes are being made to ensure child care practitioners certified at the higher levels have educational backgrounds with a more solid foundation in early childhood, child development, and family studies. Child care educators with these related educational backgrounds will have more knowledge to support the healthy development and well-being of children in child care environments.

Why is the language proficiency requirement being revised?

Communication skills are essential to providing quality child care. A child care educator must be able to communicate, write clearly and listen to children and their families to effectively support a child's needs.

When will the new equivalencies take effect?

The new equivalencies are effective on April 2, 2018. Applicants who apply before the April 2, 2018 deadline will be given until September 30, 2018 (six months) to submit all required documentation to be certified under the previous equivalencies.

Will the language proficiency requirement apply to people in the process of applying for certification?

No. Individuals who have submitted a certification application before April 2, 2018, and are in the process of submitting their documents will have until September 30, 2018 to submit their language proficiency assessment for certification under the previous equivalencies.

Will current certified child care staff be required to re-certify if they do not meet the new requirements?

No. Certified staff will retain their awarded certification level.