



Assignment 1b CDA F.A.Q. Frequently Asked Questions about the CDA

1. How long does it take to get my Child Development Associate (CDA)?

That depends on many factors. Think about how many hours of experience and clock hours you have already completed. This information will give you an idea of how much training and experience you still need. Also, look at how many hours your training program offers per month. Your advisor or training program instructor can help you develop a plan for completing your CDA. Remember that you can only use clock hours that you have accumulated during the five years immediately prior to the date you submit your application.

2. What is the process I go through to get my CDA?

The bulk of your time will be spent accumulating your experience and clock hours of training. Get started on these first. Your resource file, observations, and parent questionnaires must be completed during the six months immediately prior to the date you apply. Therefore, you want to be near completion of your hours and experience when you do these. When you are finished with these, have your advisor check over them. Now you are ready to send in your application for your CDA. In time, a CDA Representative will contact you to set up your verification visit. During the verification visit she or he will collect your parent questionnaires, observation book, autobiography and competency statements. Your CDA Representative will look at your resource file and conduct your oral and written assessments.

3. How much does it cost?

The current fee for the assessment, listed in the application form, is \$325. The payment is mailed in with your application form. Scholarships for the CDA assessment fee are available through Louisiana Pathways. For assessment scholarship information, please call 1-800-245-8925. Your training program may also involve fees.

4. What training hours count for the CDA?

Training that is provided through Child Care Resource and Referral agencies such as NSU Child and family Network count for CDA. Hours taken during conferences do not count for CDA clock hours, except under certain circumstances. Remember, all clock hours must be accumulated in the five years immediately prior to your application date in order to count. Your advisor can help you organize your clock hours into the correct CDA subject areas. Make sure you receive a certificate for all training sessions you attend and keep your certificates in a safe place.

5. Are there application deadlines to meet?

There are no application deadlines, but you will need to submit your application well ahead of the time you need to have your certificate.

Remember: If you are applying for a Louisiana Pathways CDA assessment scholarship, you will need to apply as soon as you are ready for assessment!

6. Can I get a packet about the CDA without taking CDA classes?

Yes, packets are available to anyone for \$28: (This includes shipping & handling. You must specify which type of CDA you wish to receive—Preschool, Infant/toddler, Family Child care, etc.

For questions about the CDA, contact:

The Council for Professional Recognition
2460 16th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009
1-800-424-4310 or (202) 265-9090
WWW.CDACouncil.org

7. Who is qualified to be my advisor?

A list of advisor qualifications is in the back of the CDA book included in your application packet. If you do not know anyone who meets the qualifications, ask your instructor for suggestions.

8. What does my advisor do?

Your advisor's responsibility is to conduct your formal observation and to help you determine when you are ready to apply for assessment. There is, however, much more that your advisor can do. Your advisor should be familiar enough with the CDA to help you through the process, answer your questions, and provide you with support. He or she can look over your resource file and do mock observations or mock assessments to prepare you for your verification visit. Ask your advisor for whatever help you need.

9. Are all CDA Credentials the same?

The CDA National Credentialing Program offers specialization in three specified areas: preschool, infant/toddler, and family child care. Additionally, a specialty is available for home visitors and bilingual staff. You will need to decide which specialization best suits your present work environment and your career goals.

10. Why should I get my CDA?

- You will be nationally recognized as an early childhood professional who is an educated and skilled caregiver for young children.
- The CDA qualifies you for certain positions in many state-licensed centers and Head Start Programs. It gives you an advantage when seeking employment or higher compensation.
- Because the CDA is a national credential, it is recognized all across the United States. This will be helpful in seeking employment if you should relocate.
- The CDA is one way to meet the Louisiana qualifications for child care center directors.
- The CDA is a good marketing tool to use in maintaining enrollment. Parents want to know that the staff members who care for their children are trained and competent.
- The CDA documents that you've had a variety of well-rounded training, have been observed as a lead caregiver, and have demonstrated your competency to provide quality care for children.

