



The Board of Counseling has amended regulations for certified substance abuse counselors (CSAC) and certified substance abuse counseling assistants (CSAC-A).

Key Regulations changes for CSAC and CSAC-A's published on January 20, 2020 and go into effect on February 19, 2020.

Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC)

1. Didactic training in substance abuse education requirements:
 - a. Total didactic hours increase from 220 hours to 240 hours.
 - b. Didactic training content areas were restructured and expanded.
 - c. Each content area requires 16 clock hours of didactic training.
 - d. Federal, state, or local government agency, public school system or licensed health facilities are now allowed to provide didactic training in substance abuse.
2. Supervision must be registered and approved prior to beginning supervised experience.
3. Prior to being approved for supervision, the applicant must have completed at least 120 hour of didactic training.
4. A supervisory contract must be established prior to approval to beginning supervised experience.
5. Any changes to the supervisor (adding/changing a supervisor) requires the applicant to submit the add/change of supervision application packet and gain Board approval *prior* to beginning a new supervised experience.
6. Supervised experience must be completed in no less than 12 months and no more than 60 months.
 - a. Supervisees who began their supervised experience prior to 2/19/2020, must complete their experience prior to 2/19/2025.
7. During the supervised experience, supervisees must use their name and the title "supervisee" in all written communications. Clients must be informed in writing of the supervisee's status and the supervisor's name, professional address, and phone number.
8. Supervisors must have professional training in supervision **after 2/19/2021**.
9. Applicants that have completed the education and supervised experience requirements and are approved to sit for the examination will be given two years to pass the examination.
10. CSACs are required to complete continuing education each renewal.
 - a. CSACs must complete a minimum of 10 contact hours of continuing education in substance abuse each renewal. **This will impact the June 30, 2021 renewal.**
 - b. Continuing education requirements are not required for the first renewal following initial certification.

Certified Substance Abuse Counseling Assistant (CSAC-A)

1. Didactic training in substance abuse education requirements:
 - a. Didactic training content areas were restructured and expanded.
 - b. Each content area requires 8 clock hours of didactic training.
 - c. Federal, state, or local government agency, public school system or licensed health facilities are now allowed to provide didactic training in substance abuse.
2. National Practitioner Data Report (NPDB) self-query is required as part of the application.
3. Applicant that have completed the education and supervised experience requirements and are approved to sit for the examination will be given two years to pass the examination.
4. CSAC-As are required to complete continuing education each renewal.
 - a. CSAC-As must complete a minimum of 5 contact hours of continuing education in substance abuse each renewal. **This will impact the June 30, 2021 renewal.**
 - b. Continuing education requirements are not required for the first renewal following initial certification.

CSAC Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC Certification Requirements – Effective 2/19/2020
Degree Requirements	Must have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree	Requirements remain unchanged.
Didactic Training in Substance Abuse Education	Didactic hours were allowed to be completed prior to, during or after supervised experience.	A minimum of 120 hours of didactic training education must be completed prior to being approved to start supervision toward licensure.
Number of Didactic Training hours	Required to complete 220 hours in 10 areas.	Required to complete 240 hours in 13 areas.
Number of clock hours and areas of didactic training in substance abuse	<p>Must complete a minimum of 10 clock hours in each of the following 8 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding the dynamics of human behavior; b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse; c. Treatment approaches; d. Continuum of care and case management skills; e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods; f. Ethics; g. Professional identity in the provision of substance abuse services; and h. Crisis intervention. <p>In addition, each applicant shall have at least 20 hours in each of the following two areas:</p>	<p>Must complete a minimum of 16 clock hours in each of the following 13 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dynamics of human behavior; b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse; c. Counseling theories and techniques; d. Continuum of care and case management skills; e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods; f. Professional orientation and ethics; g. Pharmacology of abused substances; h. Trauma and crisis intervention; i. Co-occurring disorders; j. Cultural competency; k. Substance abuse counseling approaches and treatment planning l. Group counseling; and

CSAC Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC Certification Requirements – Effective 2/19/2020
	(i) Substance abuse counseling treatment planning and substance abuse research; and (ii) Group counseling.	m. Prevention, screening, and assessment of substance use and abuse.
Programs approved to provide didactic training in substance abuse education	a. An accredited university or college; or b. Seminars and workshops that meet the requirements of subsection B of this section and are offered or approved by one of the following: (1) The American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors and its state affiliates. (2) The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and its state affiliates. (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards. (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates. (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates. (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. (7) NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals and its state and local affiliates. (8) National Association of Social Workers. (9) National Board for Certified Counselors.	a. <u>A regionally</u> accredited university or college; or b. Seminars and workshops that meet the requirements of subsection B of this section and are offered or approved by one of the following: (1) <u>Federal, state, or local governmental agencies; public school systems; or licensed health facilities. (Includes Community Service Boards)</u> (2) The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and its state affiliates. (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards. (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates. (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates. (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. (7) NAADAC and its state and local affiliates. (8) National Association of Social Workers. (9) National Board for Certified Counselors.



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CSAC Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC Certification Requirements – Effective 2/19/2020
	(10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body. (11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.	(10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body <u>recognized by the board</u> . (11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.
Registration of Supervision	Supervision was not required to be pre-approved but was suggested.	Supervision must be registered and approved by the board prior to beginning supervised experience. Supervision that is not pre-approved cannot be counted toward certification.
Supervisory Contract	The application signed by the supervisee and supervisor was considered a contract.	CSAC supervisees must have an established supervisory contract in place. Examples of a CSAC supervisory contract is available on the Board’s website.
Add/Change in Supervision	Add/Change of supervision was not required to be pre-approved but was suggested.	Changing or adding a supervisor must be registered and approved by the board prior to beginning of supervised experience. Supervision that is not pre-approved cannot count toward certification.
Supervision time limit	No time limit.	Supervision must be completed in no less than 12 months and no more than 60 months. Supervision that began prior to 2/19/2020 must be completed by 2/19/2025.



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CSAC Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC Certification Requirements – Effective 2/19/2020
Notification to Public	Not applicable.	During the supervised experience, supervisees must use their name and the title “supervisee” in all written communications. Clients must be informed in writing of the supervisee’s status and the supervisor’s name, professional address, and phone number.
Supervised Experience	Must include a minimum of 2,000 hours of supervised experience in the delivery of clinical substance abuse counseling services. The supervised experience must include a minimum of one hour and a maximum of four hours per week of supervision between the supervisor and the applicant to total 100 hours. (no more than half of these hours can be satisfied with group supervision)	Must include a minimum of 2,000 hours of supervised experience in practice of substance abuse counseling services. The supervised experience must include a minimum of one hour and a maximum of four hours per 40 hours of work experience between the supervisor and the applicant to total 100 hours. (no more than half of these hours can be satisfied with group supervision)
Experimental tasks	180 hours of experience performing experimental tasks with substance abuse clients. Each of these tasks must be performed for at least eight hours under supervision and must be verified as a part of the verification of supervision which must be signed by the supervisor.	160 hours of performing experimental tasks with substance abuse clients. All other requirements remain the same.
Examination time-frame	Not Applicable.	Applicant must pass the NCACI examination within two years of Board approval . If the applicant does not pass the examination within two years, the applicant must reapply and meet the regulations in effect at that time.

CSAC Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC Certification Requirements – Effective 2/19/2020
Supervisor Training	Not Applicable.	After 2/19/2021, a clinical supervisor must obtain professional training in supervision consisting of 3 credit hour or 4 quarter hours in graduate-level coursework in supervision or at least 20 hours of continuing education in supervision offered by a provider approved under 18VAC115-30-50.
Supervisor Qualifications	<p>Supervisor must meet one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be a licensed professional counselor (LPC), licensed clinical psychologist (LCP), licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), licensed marriage & family therapist (LMFT), medical doctor, (MD) or registered nurse (RN) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Board recognized national certification in substance abuse counseling; or, • documentation of a minimum of one year of experience in substance abuse counseling and at least 100 hours of didactic training 2. Be a licensed substance abuse treatment practitioner (LSATP); or, 3. Be a Virginia CSAC who has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Board recognized national certification in 	<p>Supervisor must hold an <u>active, unrestricted license or certification</u> and must meet one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Be a licensed professional counselor (LPC), licensed clinical psychologist (LCP), licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), licensed marriage & family therapist (LMFT), medical doctor, (MD) or registered nurse (RN) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Board recognized national certification in substance abuse counseling; or, • A Virginia CSAC; or, • documentation of a minimum of one year of experience in substance abuse counseling and at least 100 hours of didactic training 5. Be a licensed substance abuse treatment practitioner (LSATP); or,

CSAC Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC Certification Requirements – Effective 2/19/2020
	substance abuse counseling; or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years’ experience as a Virginia CSAC. 	6. Be a Virginia CSAC who has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years’ experience as a Virginia CSAC.
Continuing Education Renewal Requirements	Not Applicable.	At each renewal, CSAC’s are required to complete a minimum of 10 contact hours of continuing education in substance abuse by an approved provider listed in 18VAC115-30-50.A and course content be consistent with 18VAC115-30-50.B. (Continuing education is not required for the first renewal following initial CSAC certification.)



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CSAC-A Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC-A Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC-A Certification Requirements – Effective 1/20/2020
Degree Requirements	Must have a minimum of a high school diploma, GED or higher.	Requirements remain unchanged.
Number of Didactic Training hours	Required to complete 120 hours in 8 areas.	Required to complete 120 hours in 13 areas .
Number of clock hours and areas of didactic training in substance abuse	<p>Each applicant must have received a minimum of 10 clock hours in each of the following eight areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding the dynamics of human behavior; b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse; c. Treatment approaches; d. Case management skills and continuum of care; e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods; f. Ethics; g. Professional identity in the provision of substance abuse services; and h. Crisis intervention. 	<p>Each applicant shall have received a minimum of <u>eight</u> clock hours in each of the following <u>13</u> areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding the dynamics of human behavior; b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse; c. <u>Counseling theories and techniques</u>; d. Case management skills and continuum of care; e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods; f. <u>Professional orientation and ethics</u>; g. <u>Cultural competency</u>; h. <u>Trauma and crisis</u> intervention; i. <u>Pharmacology of abused substances</u>; j. <u>Co-occurring disorders</u>; k. <u>Substance abuse counseling approaches and treatment planning</u>; l. <u>Group counseling</u>; and m. <u>Prevention, screening, and assessment of substance use and abuse</u>.

CSAC-A Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC-A Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC-A Certification Requirements – Effective 1/20/2020
<p>Programs approved to provide didactic training in substance abuse education</p>	<p>a. An accredited university or college; or</p> <p>b. Seminars and workshops that meet the requirements of subsection B of this section and are offered or approved by one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors and its state affiliates. (2) The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and its state affiliates. (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards. (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates. (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates. (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. (7) NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals and its state and local affiliates. (8) National Association of Social Workers. (9) National Board for Certified Counselors. (10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body. (11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by 	<p>a. <u>A regionally</u> accredited university or college; or</p> <p>b. Seminars and workshops that meet the requirements of subsection B of this section and are offered or approved by one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) <u>Federal, state, or local governmental agencies; public school systems; or licensed health facilities. (Includes Community Service Boards)</u> (2) The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and its state affiliates. (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards. (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates. (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates. (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification. (7) NAADAC and its state and local affiliates. (8) National Association of Social Workers. (9) National Board for Certified Counselors. (10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body <u>recognized by the board.</u> (11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by



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CSAC-A Certification Requirements	(OLD) CSAC-A Certification Requirements	(NEW) CSAC-A Certification Requirements – Effective 1/20/2020
	the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.	the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.
Supervised Experience	180 hours of experience performing the tasks outlined in 18VAC115-30-62.A.2. with substance abuse clients while under supervision.	No changes to the requirement.
Examination time-frame	Not Applicable.	Applicant must pass the CSAC-A written examination within two years of Board approval . If the applicant does not pass the examination within two years, the applicant must reapply and meet the regulations in effect at that time.
National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) Self-Report	Not Applicable.	Applicants submitting the CSAC-A by Examination must submit the NPDB self-report.
Continuing Education Renewal Requirements	Not Applicable.	At each renewal, CSAC-A's are required to complete a minimum of 5 contact hours of continuing education in substance abuse by an approved provider listed in 18VAC115-30-62.A and course content be consistent with 18VAC115-30-62.B. (Continuing education is not required for the first renewal following initial CSAC-A certification.)



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CSAC and CSAC-A FAQs

RENEWAL:

How will I know when I need to renew my certification?

Your CSAC or CSAC-A certification will expire June 30th of each year. The Board will send you a renewal email approximately six (6) weeks prior to your certification expiration date and will provide you with instructions on how to renew online. Please ensure that you keep your email updated with the Board. After you have been issued a certification, you should update your email address by logging onto the DHP [Online Licensing System](#).

How do I know if my continuing education hours will count toward CSAC renewal?

As a CSAC, you will be required to complete ten (10) hours of continuing education (CE) substance abuse each year. Your course(s) must be from an approved provider listed in Regulations 18VAC115-30-50(A) and your course content must be in content areas listed in 18VAC115-30-50(B). Please note that staff will not pre-approve your CE hours. You must use your best and professional judgement to determine if the course meets the requirements as outlined in the Regulations.

Approved Providers as listed in 18VAC115-30-50(A)

- a. A regionally accredited university or college; or
- b. Seminars and workshops that meet the requirements of subsection B of this section and are offered or approved by one of the following:
 - (1) Federal, state, or local governmental agencies; public school systems; or licensed health facilities.
 - (2) The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and its state affiliates.
 - (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards.
 - (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates.
 - (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates.
 - (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.
 - (7) NAADAC and its state and local affiliates.
 - (8) National Association of Social Workers.
 - (9) National Board for Certified Counselors.

(10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body recognized by the board.

(11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.

Course Content as listed in 18VAC115-30-50(B)

- a. Dynamics of human behavior;
- b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse;
- c. Counseling theories and techniques;
- d. Continuum of care and case management skills;
- e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods;
- f. Professional orientation and ethics;
- g. Pharmacology of abused substances;
- h. Trauma and crisis intervention;
- i. Co-occurring disorders;
- j. Cultural competency;
- k. Substance abuse counseling approaches and treatment planning;
- l. Group counseling;
- m. Prevention, screening, and assessment of substance use and abuse.

How do I know if my continuing education hours will count toward CSAC-A renewal?

As a CSAC-A, you will be required to complete five (5) hours of continuing education (CE) substance abuse each year. Your course(s) must be from an approved provider listed in Regulations 18VAC115-30-62(A) and your course content must be in content areas listed in 18VAC115-30-62(B). Please note that staff will not pre-approve your CE hours. You must use your best and professional judgement to determine if the course meets the requirements as outlined in the Regulations.

Approved Providers as listed in 18VAC115-30-62(A)

- a. A regionally accredited university or college; or
- b. Seminars and workshops that meet the requirements of subsection B of this section and are offered or approved by one of the following:
 - (1) Federal, state, or local governmental agencies; public school systems; or licensed health facilities.



- (2) The American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists and its state affiliates.
- (3) The American Association of State Counseling Boards.
- (4) The American Counseling Association and its state and local affiliates.
- (5) The American Psychological Association and its state affiliates.
- (6) The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.
- (7) NAADAC and its state and local affiliates.
- (8) National Association of Social Workers.
- (9) National Board for Certified Counselors.
- (10) A national behavioral health organization or certification body recognized by the board.
- (11) Individuals or organizations that have been approved as continuing competency sponsors by the American Association of State Counseling Boards or a counseling board in another state.

Course Content as listed in 18VAC115-30-62(B)

- a. Understanding the dynamics of human behavior;
- b. Signs and symptoms of substance abuse;
- c. Counseling theories and techniques;
- d. Continuum of care and case management skills;
- e. Recovery process and relapse prevention methods;
- f. Professional orientation and ethics;
- g. Cultural competency;
- h. Trauma and crisis intervention;
- i. Pharmacology of abused substances;
- j. Co-occurring disorders;
- k. Substance abuse counseling approaches and treatment planning;
- l. Group counseling;
- m. Prevention, screening, and assessment of substance use and abuse.

What happens if I don't renew my certification by the expiration date?

If you do not renew by your expiration date, you will be required to pay a late renewal fee. You are able to renew late for up to one year after the expiration date. After one year, you will be required to apply by reinstatement and meet the reinstatement requirements.

Do I need to submit a copy of the continuing education certificates to the Board?

No, you do not need to submit a copy of your certificates to the Board unless you are audited. The Board will conduct audits of certificate holders to verify compliance. As a CSAC or CSAC-A, you must maintain the original documentation, including official transcripts showing credit hours earned or certificates of participation, for a period of three years following renewal.

I hold a license as a LPC and CSAC. Can I use some of my continuing education for my LPC renewal toward the CSAC continuing education requirement?

Yes, you can potentially combine your continuing education hours for both LPC and CSAC. However, the CSAC continuing education hours must be specifically in substance abuse.

Are continuing education hours required to be in person?

No. Continuing education hours can be provided in-person or on-line as long as they are received by an approved provider in the content areas as outlined in the Regulations.

Are CSAC or CSAC-As required to complete continuing education for their first renewal?

No. Completion of continuing education is not required for the first renewal following initial certification in Virginia.

What is a contact hour?

A contact hour equals 60 minutes. One contact hour is defined as a 60 minutes of participation in and successful completion of a continuing education program.

Is there a "grace period" if I do not renew my registration by the 30th of June of the renewal year?

No.

Can I renew early?

A certification can only be updated within 60 days prior to the expiration date. Early renewal for military deployment may be considered by call (804) 367-4610.

May I carry over hours of CE for the next renewal period?

No.

How do I notify the board office of an address change and/or name change?

Address changes must be made online through the [Online Licensing](#) website or by using the [Name/Address Change Form](#). All name changes must be accompanied by a marriage license, divorce decree, or court order.

Any change in the address of record or public address, if different from the address of record, shall be furnished to the board within 60 days.

What is my address of record?

Section 54.1-2400.02.B of the Code of Virginia requires the Department of Health Professions (DHP) to collect an official address of record from each health professional to be used by DHP for agency purposes. The Code also requires DHP to provide an opportunity for a health professional to provide a second address for the purpose of public dissemination. If there is no second (public) address provided, the official address of record will be used as the public address for the purpose of public dissemination. If the health professional would prefer that his/her address of record remain confidential, then an alternative public address must be provided to DHP. (Note: the License Lookup feature on the DHP public website does not contain the full address. However, public addresses are available by contacting Virginia Interactive Premium Service or the Board.) An individual is not required to submit a place of residence for either the official address of record or the public address. A post office box or a practice location is acceptable.

Changes to either address may be made at the time of renewal or at any time by written notification to the Board. Changes to the address of record may also be made at any time by accessing your licensure information through the online system. Any change that is made to one of the addresses does not automatically update the other address. Address information should be kept current for the address of record and the public address (if different from the address of record) at all times.