

## Tips for Earning a CDA Credential

### What is a CDA?

The Child Development Associate (CDA) is a National Credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition (CDA Council 800-424-4310 or [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)). Early childhood practitioners who hold a current CDA Credential can be recognized as a Master Teacher in Oklahoma according to DHS Licensing standards and Stars.

### What are the benefits of a CDA?

- **Educational Stipend:** If candidate receives an assessment scholarship through the Scholars Program they are eligible for an educational stipend once CDA credential is earned. For more information visit [www.okhighered.org/scholars](http://www.okhighered.org/scholars).
- **REWARD** – Provides salary supplements to teachers, directors and family child care providers working with young children in child care settings. Salary supplements range from \$400 to \$1,500 per year. For more information contact the Center for Early Childhood and Professional Development (CECPD) at 405-799-6383 or 888-446-7608.
- **The Oklahoma Registry** recognizes the professional development of all individuals working in the early care and education field. Levels in **The Oklahoma Registry** reflect a measure of formal education gained through attending universities, community colleges, and/or technology centers. **The Oklahoma Registry** Professional Development Ladder awards levels based on either accumulated training or degrees attained and provides a certificate intended for display in the individual's place of employment. The Professional Development Ladder is renewable every year. To renew your PDL, you must meet the requirements for a level and have completed 20 hours of Tier I or higher training in the past 12 months.

### Who Can Apply for the CDA?

- Be at least 18 years of age
- High School diploma or GED
- 480 hours of experience working with children within three years before application
- Complete 120 clock hours with a minimum of 10 clock hours in each of the 8 CDA content areas **OR** 9 college credit hours in child development/ early childhood training any time before application



Training options include:

- College credit bearing classes in CD/ECE offered through community colleges state wide
- Early Education: Pathway to Your National Credential (Pathway) offered through technology centers and online
- Child Care Career community based courses offered at local child care centers
- CARE Courses offered through correspondence and online
- Other training that applies to the eight CDA content areas
- Complete a Professional Portfolio and the Family Questionnaires within six months before application
- Pay \$425.00 fee to the Council for Professional Recognition in Washington D.C **OR** make application with Scholars Program for the Assessment Scholarship. Call 866-343-3881 or 405-225-9396 or visit [www.okhighered.org/scholars](http://www.okhighered.org/scholars) for eligibility requirements.

### What is the CDA Competency Standards Book?

- A CDA Competency Standards book replaced the CDA Packet and can be purchased from the CDA Council for \$25 plus S&H. (CDA Council 800-424-4310 or [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)) **OR** it can be obtained through the Scholars Program if eligible for scholarship. For eligibility requirements contact the Scholars Program at 866-343-3881 or 405-225-9396 or visit [www.okhighered.org/scholars](http://www.okhighered.org/scholars)
- Applicants will need to specify the type of setting they are pursuing when ordering:
  - Infant/Toddler (birth to 36 months)
  - Preschool (3-5 years)
  - Family Child Care Provider (birth to 5 years)

### What is the timeline/process for applying for the CDA? (All information below is based on approximate time needed to earn the CDA)

10-12 months	Complete formal education, Professional Portfolio, Family Questionnaires, and select a CDA Professional Development (PD) Specialist and obtain the name and PD Specialist ID#. (To locate a CDA PD Specialist visit <a href="http://www.cdacouncil.org">www.cdacouncil.org</a> and select CDA PD Specialist at the top of the page and then click on the orange box  ) Complete all steps required to locate a PD Specialist.
2-4 weeks	Candidate will submit either The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential paper application, along with \$425.00 fee to the Council for Professional Recognition or apply online at <a href="http://www.cdacouncil.org">www.cdacouncil.org</a> and click on  located at the top right hand corner of the web page. Candidates applying through Scholars <b>CANNOT APPLY ONLINE.</b> (Timeframe applies to paper applications mailed to the Council.)
1-2 weeks	Candidate will be receive a "Ready to Schedule" email from the Council for Professional Recognition. The email provides the assigned Candidate ID number to schedule the National CDA Exam at a Pearson Vue test site and to schedule the Verification Visit with the PD Specialist. The National CDA Exam and Verification Visit can be done in any order. Both steps <b>MUST</b> be completed by the deadline on the "Ready to Schedule" email.
1-2 weeks	Notification of CDA Credential being awarded after Verification Visit and the National CDA Exam has been completed. All scores are sent electronically to the Council. The Council will notify the CDA Candidate of the results of the National Credential by email. The National CDA Credential certificate will be mailed to the Candidate. The CDA Candidate can also call the Council's automated system to hear the status of the CDA Credentialing Process 800-424-4310.



### What is the role of the CDA PD Specialist?

- ✓ The PD Specialist will complete the **ROR** Model (Review, Observe, Reflect) on each candidate.
  - ✓ The PD Specialist will **review** the candidates professional portfolio and verify all requirements are completed for the Verification Visit.
  - ✓ The PD Specialist will **observe** the candidate working as a lead teacher for approximately 2 hours in the child care facility or family child care home.
  - ✓ The PD Specialist will complete the Comprehensive Scoring Instrument (CSI) located in the back of the CDA Competency Standards Book
  - ✓ The PD Specialist will complete the **reflective** dialogue with the candidate after the observation and review of the professional portfolio. The reflective dialogue will be kept confidential between the PD Specialist and the candidate, will not be scored and has no bearing on the award of the CDA Credential.
  - ✓ The PD Specialist will submit the recommended scores to the Council for Professional Recognition electronically for the professional portfolio and observation.
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### How do I renew my CDA?

- A CDA Credential is valid for three years. To renew, a candidate must meet five criteria:
    1. Current First Aid Certificate (Pediatric)
    2. 4.5 Continuing Education Units (CEU's) OR 3 college credits in Early Childhood and/or Child Development
    3. Minimum of 80 hours of work experience with young children within the current year
    4. Letter of Recommendation Form
    5. Membership in a national or local early childhood professional organization
  - Purchase a CDA Renewal Packet for \$15 plus S&H from the Council. To order online go to [www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org) *Bookstore – Assessment Materials* or for telephone, fax, or mail orders, print the order form.
  - Complete the CDA Renewal Form and pay \$75 to the Council for Professional Recognition if applying online or \$100 if applying for renewal by mail.
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### Quick Tips

- ✓ Make sure the name on the paper **or** online CDA Credential application matches the name on the photo ID to present to PearsonVUE.
- ✓ Make sure to check spam and junk email folders for the “Ready to Schedule” email. The email will come from [CDAReady@cdacouncil.org](mailto:CDAReady@cdacouncil.org).
- ✓ Make sure the CDA Exam and the Verification Visit are completed by the deadline on the “Ready to Schedule” notice.