



CHW CERTIFICATION TRAINING

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CHW CERTIFICATION

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What is CHW Certification?

- Landmark legislation created the certification board
 - Purpose is to govern the certification and practice of Certified Community Health Workers in MA
- Establishes 11 member Board
 - Chaired by the Commissioner or her designee and 10 members appointed by governor
 - Includes **4 seats for CHWs** recommended by MACHW



Why Does Certification Matter?

➤ For the Public:

- Protect the health and safety of the citizens of the commonwealth
- Competency based
- Standardize training of 10 core competencies

➤ For Providers & Employers:

- Set practice standards
- Set training standards
- Build access to culturally competent support for vulnerable populations to reduce barriers

➤ For CHWs:

- Builds professional identity
- Workforce growth and development
- Voluntary certification
- Multiple Pathways
- No minimum educational requirements

➤ Public & Private Insurers:

- Scope of practice, training
- Workforce data for evaluation, planning and research
- Aligned with value-based payments for ACO roll out



It Acknowledges The Important Role of CHWs

Distinguished from other health professionals in that they:

- **Hired primarily for their understanding of the populations and communities** they serve
- **Conduct outreach** a significant portion of the time
- Experience **servicing in community settings**





HOW DO I BECOME CERTIFIED?



Voluntary Certification

You can practice as a
CHW without
certification

You cannot call
yourself a “certified
CHW” if you have not
received Board
Certification





Becoming a Certified CHW

Step #1: Assess whether you meet the CHW definition

Step #2: Calculate your CHW Work Hours

Step #3: Choose Available Pathway

Step #4: Secure 3 References on your CHW Core Competencies

Step #5: Demonstrate Suitability for Certification

Step #6: Complete and submit the application and pay fee (\$35)

Step #7: Respond to any Board requests



Step #1

- CHW is an umbrella term encompassing many different job titles.
- Your title does not have to be “Community Health Worker”
- Multiple job titles could qualify for certification
- CHW could be:
 - Health Educator
 - Patient Navigator
 - Promotora de Salud
 - Advocate
 - Etc.
- Read the regulation’s definition of CHW to determine if your roles and responsibilities align



CHW Definition

A CHW is a public health worker who applies his or her unique understanding of the experience, language and culture of the populations he or she serves in order to carry out one or more of the following roles:

- Providing culturally appropriate health education, information, and outreach in community-based settings, such as homes, schools, clinics, shelters, local businesses, and community centers;
- Bridging/culturally mediating between individuals, communities and health and human services, including actively building individual and community capacity;
- Assuring that people access the services they need;
- Providing direct services, such as informal counseling, social support, care coordination, and health screenings; and
- Advocating for individual and community needs
- And other roles that may be identified by the board



Step #2

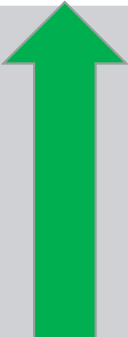

Calculate Your Work Hours

- 40 Hours/Week * 52 Weeks = Total Full Time
- 20 Hours/Week * 52 Weeks = Total Part-Time



Step #3: Pathways for Certification

2 Pathways

Combined Training & Work Experience	Work Experience Only
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80 hours of training• 2,000 hours of work experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4,000 hours work experience• Only an option for first 3 years of certification 
Available once Board approves CHW Training Programs	Available Now



Step # 4: Demonstrate Your Competencies

Have 3 references that document your competencies in:

- ① Outreach Methods and Strategies
- ② Individual and Community Assessment
- ③ Effective Communication
- ④ Cultural Responsiveness and Mediation
- ⑤ Education to Promote Healthy Behavior Change
- ⑥ Care Coordination and System Navigation
- ⑦ Use of Public Health Concepts and Approaches
- ⑧ Advocacy and Community Capacity Building
- ⑨ Documentation
- ⑩ Professional Skills and Conduct



Step #4: References

- At least 1 must be an individual who is a current or former supervisor working as a community health worker in the United States;
- At least 2 must be based on work experience in the United States; and
- References may not be provided by an individual who is a family member of the applicant or current or former client of the applicant in the applicant's capacity as a community health worker



Step #5: Suitability for Certification (or Good Moral Character)

- **Board will review:**
 - CHW Understanding of the CHW Code of Ethics developed by MACHW
 - CHW Understanding of the CHW Professional Standards of Conduct in the regulations
 - Any disciplinary action with other licenses
 - History of involvement with criminal justice system through CORI



Step #5: CORI Review Process

- Balance **protection of public** with ensuring criminal history review is **job-related and not overbroad**
- Look only at convictions
- No blanket bans, case by case decision-making
- Ensure convictions considered are job-related
- Define and consider rehabilitation and mitigating factors
- Be transparent about process and rights



Step #6: Application Process

- **Application and Forms** are available on the Board's website at:
<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/board-of-certification-of-community-health-workers>
- Follow the prompts: **Community Health Worker Certification**
- <https://www.mass.gov/community-health-worker-certification>

Apply for Certification

- ✓ Read the application checklist carefully
 - ✓ Be sure to submit all required documents
 - ✓ Make a copy of the application
- Applicants can receive help filling out the application



Board Website

Secure | <https://www.mass.gov/about-the-board-of-certification-of-community-health-workers>

Apps Local Support Home PWTf DPH CHW MassHealth Publications Linkage Publications PCORI HHS Federal Health Equity Occupational Health

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LIVING WORKING LEARNING VISITING & EXPLORING YOUR GOVERNMENT

About the Board of Certification of Community Health Workers

Learn more about our Board. See our meeting updates, regulations, and more resources.

Our Board holds regular meetings, which you can find posted here. You can also explore our polices, regulations, and additional resources.

OFFERED BY

Board of Certification of Community Health Workers

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



Your Responsibilities

- **Applicants and Certified CHWs must:**

- Notify the Board in writing of any of the following events within 30 days of their occurrence:

- ✓ **Change of address**

- ✓ **Change of name**

- ✓ **Change of Social Security Number**



Certification Renewal

- **Certification valid for 2 years**
 - 15 CEUs Per Cycle
- Postcard reminders sent 90 days prior to expiration to address of record
- **Online renewal encouraged**
 - license renewed immediately (real time)
 - renewal can be verified on Board's website
- **Online renewals cost (\$35)**



Disciplinary Action

- Regulations outline a process for investigating complaints against a certified CHW and the rights of CHWs in this process
- Violations of the Professional and Ethical Standards of Conduct for Certified CHWs will be investigated
- Can result in loss of certification, suspension, reprimand or other actions
- Read and understand the Professional and Ethical Standards of Conduct!



Resources

Board's Web Page:

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/board-of-certification-of-community-health-workers>

CHW Certification Fact Sheet

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/10/19/chw-certification-fact-sheet.pdf>

FAQs:

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/10/03/CHW%20FAQ.PDF>

Office of Community Health Workers:

<https://www.mass.gov/community-health-workers>

Massachusetts Association of Community Health Workers: <http://www.machw.org/>



Board Contact

Board Web Page:

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/board-of-certification-of-community-health-workers>

FAQs:

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/10/03/CHW%20FAQ.PDF>

CHW Certification Fact Sheet

<https://www.mass.gov/community-health-workers>

Address:

239 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114

E-mail:

Multiboard.admin@state.ma.us

Phone: 617-973-0806

Fax: 617-973-0983





EXAMPLES



CHW Example #1: Maria

- Worked for 5 years as a CHW with a community health center
- Has 8,000 work hours
- Did not take a core competency training



Apply for Certification through the Experience Only Pathway



CHW Example #2: Natalie

- Worked for 1 year as a patient navigator with a hospital
- Has 2,000 work hours
- Took a training program by a non-profit organization in August 2018
- Board approved training program in August 2018



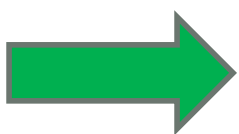
Apply for Certification through the Training and Experience Pathway

Can only apply once the training program is approved by the Board



CHW Example #3: Sean

- Worked for 1 years as a health educator with a community-based organization
- Has 2,000 work hours
- Took a training program by a Community College in January 2018
- Board approved training program in August 2018 retroactive to June 2017



Apply for Certification through the Training and Experience Pathway

Can only apply once the training program is approved by the Board



CHW Example #4: Rodrigo

- Just started a job with a community health center as a CHW
- Has 200 work hours
- Took a training program by community health center in April 2018



Not eligible for certification yet – needs more work hours

Can only apply for Training and Experience Pathway if the health center applies for Board approval of training