

Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Policy

A. Purpose

This policy establishes certification and renewal criteria for promotores/ community health workers (CHWs), CHW instructors, and training programs in Texas.

The department shall establish certification criteria in accordance with the Texas Health and Safety Code §146. The department will renew the certification of a promotor(a)/community health worker, instructor, or training program every two years if renewal requirements are met. This certification is free of charge.

B. Definitions

Certified Instructor – An individual approved by the department to provide instruction and training in one or more core competencies to promotores or community health workers who has in-depth knowledge of the role of a promotor(a) or community health worker and proficiency in adult education methods, core competencies, curriculum development and assessment, as well as culturally relevant facilitation of diverse topics. A certified instructor must have the ability to enhance the knowledge and capacity of promotores or community health workers by providing them with tools, information, and techniques to assist the communities they serve.

Certified Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker – An individual approved by the department to act as a liaison and provide cultural mediation between health care and social services and the community. A promotor(a) or community health worker is a trusted member, and has a close understanding of the ethnicity, language, socio-economic status, and life experiences of the community served. A promotor(a) or community health worker assists people to gain access to needed services and builds individual, community, and system capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, patient navigation and follow-up, community health education and information, informal counseling, social support, advocacy, and participation in clinical research.

CEU – Continuing Education Unit, also known as CE (continuing education) is a method of measuring continuing education and training. Measured in 15-minute increments of instruction: .5 CEU = 30 minutes, .75 CEU = 45 minutes, 1 CEU = one hour.

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Core Competencies – The set of knowledge, key skills and abilities which all promotores/CHWs and CHW Instructors must show evidence of mastery through training or significant experience. Current core competencies include communication, interpersonal, service coordination, capacity-building, advocacy, teaching, organizational and knowledge base on specific health issues.

DSHS-certified CEU – Continuing education unit from material that has been reviewed and approved by DSHS and taught by a certified instructor under an approved training program.

Non-certified CEU – Continuing education unit obtained through education or training from material that has not been reviewed by DSHS but is still within the scope of a promotor(a)/CHW or CHW Instructor and covers at least one of the core competencies.

Training Program – Organization approved by DSHS to provide training to promotores/CHWs and/or Instructors.

C. Application Processing

Training Programs

The Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program has up to 120 days to process applications and send notice of approval of certification or notice of application deficiency. The time period applies from the date an application is received.

The department shall send a notice listing the additional materials and revisions required to an applicant whose application is incomplete. The department may require a training program to submit a new application if additional materials and revisions are not submitted within 90 days.

The approval process ends upon mailing of approval packet. Approval packet consists of:

1. Letter acknowledging approval of application
2. Certificate

CHW Instructors and Promotores/CHWs

The Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program has up to 90 days to process applications and send notice of approval of certification or notice of application deficiency. The time period applies from the date an application is received.

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The department shall send a notice listing the additional materials and revisions required to an applicant whose application is incomplete. The department may require an applicant to submit a new application if additional materials and revisions are not submitted within 3 weeks of the notification.

The approval process ends upon mailing of approval packet. Approval packet consists of:

1. Letter acknowledging approval of application
2. Certificate
3. ID badge - For CHWs and Instructors

Competency Verification of Promotores/CHWs and CHW Instructors

Verification based on Completion of Training

The Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program verifies completion of an approved Promotor(a)/CHW or CHW Instructor certification course by visual verification of applicant's name on the training report provided by the training program.

Competency Verification based on Experience

The Promotor(a) or Community Health Worker Training and Certification Program verifies experience by phone with the supervisor(s) or professional references listed in the "Experience" section of the application.

- a. Verification cannot be done through email or notarized letter.
- b. Phone calls are not made to phone numbers outside of the continental United States.
- c. The phone number listed for the supervisor(s) in the "Experience" section of the application must be for a place of business or business cellular number. CHW Training and Certification Program will not call personal home or cellular numbers.
- d. CHW Training and Certification Program will not verify any single experience less than 300 hours. Each experience must meet at least half of the skills under each core competencies. The applicant must demonstrate mastery of all core competencies across all the experience listed.
- e. For Instructors – Verification focus is on experience teaching/training CHWs or other health service providers ("train-the-trainer"), not direct training of community members.

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- f. For CHWs - Verification focus is on experience working in a community health worker role consisting of direct contact with the community.

D. Certification of Training Programs

Initial Application

When an application is submitted to be a certified training program, organizations must include the following:

1. The complete initial certification application provided by the department
2. A plan to provide training on an annual basis
 - a. Possible locations
 - b. Training schedule
 - c. Procedures related to recruitment and registration/enrollment
 - d. Cost of class
 - e. Training methodology (face-to-face or online training)
 - f. Outlines requirements for course completion/graduation
 - g. Training evaluation
3. A curriculum consistent with the type of training that will be provided
 - a. Certification course for CHWs or CHW Instructors
 - b. Continuing education for CHWs or CHW Instructors

An organization may submit an application that includes the use of a certified curriculum from an approved training program that has agreed to share the certified curriculum. In this situation, the application must include:

1. Description of changes, if any, to the certified curriculum.
2. Documentation stating the approved training program agrees to share the certified curriculum with the organization applying for certification.

Renewal

Training programs shall renew certification every two years. To renew a certification, training programs must submit the following:

1. The complete renewal application provided by the department
2. A record of the trainings offered during the two-year certification cycle
3. List of instructors affiliated with the training program
4. Training plan to provide annual training that includes:
 - a. Possible locations
 - b. Training schedule
 - c. Procedures related to recruitment and registration/enrollment
 - d. Cost of class

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- e. Training methodology (face-to-face or online training)
- f. Outlines requirements for course completion/graduation
- g. Training evaluation
- h. If applicable, submission and competency breakdown of new curriculum

Curricula

A certification curriculum for CHWs or CHW Instructors must:

1. Be at least 160 hours.
2. Cover all core competencies with equal time.
3. Include appropriate citations and references documenting sources of information detailed in the curriculum.
4. Include a component of hands-on learning, such as field practice, internship or practicum.
5. Include activities and other strategies consistent with adult learning theory and principles.
6. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and literacy level appropriate to the topic and target audience.
7. Include a translation of the curriculum if the curriculum will be provided in a language other than English.
8. Specify the method or methods by which training will be delivered, including classroom instruction and use of distance learning.
9. Include a method or process to evaluate and document the acquisition of knowledge and mastery of skills by the individual trained.
10. Include a method or process for the individual trained to evaluate the training experience.
11. Be reviewed and approved by DSHS.
12. Be provided within the geographic limits of the state of Texas if offered in person.

All continuing education for CHWs or CHW Instructors curricula must:

1. Cover one or more of the core competencies.
2. Identify the title, total contact hours, and hours per core competency.
3. Include specific learner objectives.
4. Include the name and organization of the curriculum developer. If curriculum was developed by another entity, include public domain information or documentation of approval by the curriculum developer.
5. Include the participation of a certified instructor in the review or development of the curriculum.

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6. Include appropriate citations and references documenting sources of information detailed in the curriculum.
7. Include activities or other strategies consistent with adult learning theory and principles.
8. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity and literacy level appropriate to the topic and target audience.
9. Include a translation of the curriculum if the curriculum will be provided in a language other than English.
10. Specify the method or methods by which training will be delivered, including classroom instruction and use of distance learning.
11. If applicable, include any pre or post-test or other process used to evaluate acquisition of knowledge by the individual trained.
12. If applicable, include an evaluation by the individual trained of the training experience.
13. Submit all material that will be used for training, including but not limited to PowerPoint presentations, lesson plans, handouts, scenarios or other activity materials.
14. Be reviewed and approved by DSHS.
15. Be offered within the geographical limits of the state of Texas if training is offered in person.

Addenda to Existing Certified Curriculum

A training program may submit an addendum when revising a current certified curriculum. However, if more than 45% of the curriculum is changed, the training program will need to resubmit the curriculum for certification.

Providing Certificates for Proof of Completion

Approved training programs must provide a certificate as proof of completion for all DSHS-certified trainings offered.

All certificates must include the following information:

1. Name of the approved training program offering the course
2. Title and date of the course
3. Name of the certified instructor who taught the course (If instructor signature line is on the certificate, signature must be included.)
4. Designation if the course offered continuing education for CHWs, Instructors, or both
5. Name of the participant/attendee

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Training Rosters

All training programs must submit a roster to the CHW Program within 7 business days after the completion of a DSHS-certified training. The roster must include the following:

1. Name of approved training program offering the course
2. Title of the course
3. Date(s) the course was offered
4. Total CEUs offered
5. Competencies covered
6. Location where course took place, including the city
7. Name of certified CHW Instructor(s) who taught the course
8. Designation if the course was for CHWs or Instructors
9. Designation if the course was for certification or for continuing education
10. Full name of participants who attended the course
11. Identification if participants are certified CHWs or certified Instructors

Training Announcements

Certified training programs must send information on upcoming trainings to the CHW Program. The CHW Program will then send it statewide or to the CHWs in the surrounding area and post it on the CHW Program website. The training notification should include the following information:

1. Name of certified training program offering the course
2. Title of the course
3. Date of the course
4. Time the course will start and end
5. Location where the course will take place
6. Number of DSHS-certified CEUs offered and if they're for CHWs or Instructors
7. Cost of the course
8. Language in the course will be taught
9. Registration information (link, email address, phone number, etc.)
10. Information of who to contact for questions (name, email, phone number, etc.)

Training information should be sent by e-mail to CHW@dshs.texas.gov at least 2 weeks prior to event.

Training announcements will be sent by the CHW Program to CHWs or Instructors statewide through the distribution list.

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E. Certification of CHW Instructors

Initial Application

Persons interested in applying to be certified as a CHW Instructor must submit the following:

1. The complete initial certification application provided by the department
2. Current photo, in color, that clearly shows all facial features
3. A resume
4. If applying based on completion of training, a copy of the CHW Instructor certification course certificate of completion
5. If applying based on teaching/training experience, complete experience verification form

Renewal

CHW Instructors must renew their certificate every two years. To renew a certificate, CHW Instructors must submit the following:

1. The complete renewal application provided by the department
2. Current photo, in color, that clearly shows all facial features
3. Proof of completion of the required continuing education, including, but not limited to, certificates, rosters, and emails confirming participation and completion

Continuing Education – Instructors

Certified Instructors are required to complete at least 20 hours of continuing education.

Continuing education shall be acceptable if the course or activity is at least 30 consecutive minutes in length (0.5 CEUs), is within the scope of a CHW Instructor, and covers at least one of the core competencies.

Continuing education can be fulfilled through the following DSHS-certified and non-certified CEU options:

1. At least 10 hours of DSHS-certified CEUs

Mandatory - 10 CEUs of training from completion of a DSHS-certified course. Can be a minimum of 5 CEUs if combined with one of the options listed below:

- a. Option 1 - maximum of 5 CEUs from continuing education for another Texas health care certification/license; other than CHW certification

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- b. Option 2 - maximum of 5 CEUs from instruction of an approved curriculum under an approved training program. 1 CEU = 2 clock hours of instruction. Requires copy of a roster that includes:
 1. Name of approved training program
 2. Title of course
 3. Date(s) course is offered
 4. Total CEUs offered
 5. Competencies covered
 6. Location of training including the city
 7. Name of the instructor who taught the class
 8. Designation if course was for CHWs or Instructors
 9. List of participants

Can have either 5 CEUs from another Texas health care certificate/license or 5 CEUs from instruction, not a combination of both.

2. At least 10 hours of non-DSHS certified CEUs
 - a. Attending conferences
 - b. Attending trainings from an organization other than a certified training program but still cover at least one core competency and are within the scope of a certified instructor
 - c. Trainings with a DSHS-certified designation for CHWs count as non-certified CEUs for instructors
3. Can have all continuing education be DSHS-certified

All certificates must include name of applicant, title and date of the course, and name of training program (or organization if non-certified CEUs).

For those with dual certification: The same continuing education activities cannot be used for both CHW and Instructor renewal. Different continuing education activities must be completed for each certification.

F. Certification of Promotores/CHWs

Persons interested in applying to be certified as a Promotor(a)/Community Health Worker must submit the following:

1. The complete initial certification application provided by the department
2. Current photo, in color, that clearly shows all facial features
3. If applying based on completion of training, copy of the CHW certification course certificate of completion
4. If applying based on experience in a CHW role, complete experience verification form

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Renewal

Promotores/CHWs must renew their certificate every two years. To renew a certificate, Promotores/CHWs must submit the following:

1. The complete renewal application provided by the department
2. Current photo, in color, that clearly shows all facial features
3. Proof of completion of the required continuing education, including certificates and emails confirming participation and completion

Continuing Education – Promotores/CHWs

Certified Promotores/CHWs are required to complete at least 20 hours of continuing education.

Continuing education shall be acceptable if the course or activity is at least 30 consecutive minutes in length (.5 CEUs) and addresses at least one core competency.

Continuing education can be fulfilled through the following DSHS-certified and non-certified options:

1. At least 10 hours of DSHS-certified CEUs

Mandatory - 10 CEUs of training from completion of a DSHS-certified course. Can be a minimum of 5 CEUs if combined with continuing education for another Texas health care certification/license.

Maximum of 5 CEUs from continuing education for another Texas health care certification/license; other than CHW Instructor certification.

2. At least 10 hours of non-DSHS certified CEUs
 - a. Attending conferences
 - b. Attending trainings from an organization other than a certified training program but still cover at least one core competency and are within the scope of a CHW
3. Can have all continuing education be DSHS-certified CEUs.

All certificates must contain name of applicant, title and date of the course, and name of training program (or organization if non-certified CEUs).

For those with dual certification: The same continuing education activities cannot be used for both CHW and Instructor renewal. Different continuing education activities must be completed for each certification.

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G. Certification Extension

CHW Instructors and promotores/CHWs can request one 90-day extension per certification cycle. When certification is renewed, the expiration date will be two-years from the original expiration date, prior to the extension.

A CHW Instructor or promotor(a)/CHW certification can be renewed up to a year from the original expiration date.

H. Change of Information

Training programs, Promotores/CHWs, and Instructors must notify the department, in writing, of any changes to their contact information, such as:

- Street or mailing address
- Phone number
- Email address

Changes to names must be requested in writing and include a legal document noting the change in name. Legal documents accepted are:

- Driver license
- Marriage or divorce documentation
- Social security card