

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY
EARLY INTERVENTION STANDARDS FOR PRIVATE PROVIDERS

As of July 1, 1991, personnel working for the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) funded Mutually Agreed Upon Written Arrangement (MAWA) Early Intervention programs providing services and supports designed to help families with children with developmental delays, ages three through five, must meet the following standards. This may be revised at the discretion of the Secretary of Education.

- I. Personnel must have an existing Pennsylvania Department of Education Public School Instructional I or Instructional II certificate in Special Education or Early Childhood Education, with the exclusion of Private Academic School Certification,

or,

- II. Obtain a Certificate of Competency. This Certificate of Competency is limited to individuals in the employment of private provider agencies. These agencies provide early intervention services and programs to disabled children via subcontract with a MAWA. This Certificate of Competency is in no way equivalent to a Public Education Certificate issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Teacher Certification and Preparation. The Certificate of Competency permits employees of subcontracted agencies to implement existing Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) developed by the MAWA on behalf of the MAWA. **Staff members who do not hold a Certificate of Competency are not authorized by PDE or Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and the Auditor General's Office to implement existing IEPs on behalf of the MAWA.** In order to obtain the Certificate of Competency, individuals must meet at least one of the following three requirements and make application as follows:

- A. Personnel with a baccalaureate or masters degree from an accredited college or university in an early intervention or child development or elementary education discipline, who are employed by a private provider agency. Individuals in this category have specific courses and practicum in an early intervention or child development discipline, but do not hold certification as in item #I. Individuals in this category who do not have a certificate as specified may apply for a Certificate of Competency in Early Intervention. To apply for the Certificate of Competency, individuals shall submit through their agency:
1. Evidence of degree and relevant coursework (**official** transcripts).
 2. Evidence of current employment in a private provider that provides early intervention services and programs to eligible young children via subcontract with a MAWA.
 3. If applicable, a Private Academic School Certificate.
 4. The application must include attestation by the agency director of the individual's work in the agency.
 5. The application must include attestation by the agency director that the individual has met requirements of state law for Health, Safety, and Criminal Background Check.

B. Personnel with a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university who are employed by a private provider agency and have at least three years experience in an early intervention program. Individuals in this category who do not have a certificate as specified in item #I may apply for a Certificate of Competency in Early Intervention. To apply for the Certificate of Competency, the individual shall submit through their agency:

1. Evidence of degree (**official** transcripts).
2. Evidence of current employment in a private provider agency provides early intervention services to eligible young children via subcontract with a MAWA.
3. Evidence of three years work experience in the field of early intervention or related field.
4. If applicable, a Private Academic School Certificate.
5. The application must include attestation by the agency director of the individual's work in the agency.
6. The application must include attestation by the agency director that the individual has met requirements of state law for Health, Safety, and Criminal Background Check.

C. Personnel who have no less than **five years** experience with the current agency of employment, which provides early intervention services and programs to eligible children through a subcontract with a MAWA and who have higher education course work leading to an associate's degree or certificate. High School diplomas alone do not qualify an applicant for a Certificate of Competency.

1. Evidence of post -secondary coursework (official transcripts or other certificates).
2. Evidence of current employment in a private provider agency that provides early intervention services and programs to eligible children, via subcontract with a MAWA.
3. Evidence and attestation by agency director of no less than **five consecutive years** of employment in current agency for Category C providing services to eligible children via subcontract with a MAWA.
4. The application must include attestation by the agency director that the individual has met requirements of state law for Health, Safety, and Criminal Background Check.

Certificates of Competency are not transferable from agency to agency.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

This document addresses the procedures to be followed regarding the standards for early intervention personnel.

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) have addressed the certification for individuals providing early intervention services in private provider agencies. Current agency staff members that do not now meet “teacher certification” requirements, may have experience and/or credentials that would qualify them for a Certificate of Competency. The following process and procedure has been developed to address the issuance of a Certificate of Competency for agency staff members who are implement existing IEPs for OCDEL funded 3-5 year old eligible children.

PROCEDURES

I. Application

- A. Specifications and applications for a Certificate of Competency are available by contacting Kathy Vradenburgh at 717-346-1117 or email at kvradenbur@pa.gov.
- B. Private provider agencies must complete an authorization form for each employee seeking a Certificate of Competency.
- C. Forms are returned with the proper documentation to the Bureau of Early Intervention Services for review.
- D. Review process.
 - 1. The application is logged in by Bureau of Early Intervention Services.
 - 2. Bureau of Early Intervention Services staff member reviews authorization requests initially to check for appropriate documentation and attestation by agency director.
 - 3. If specifications are met, request is routed for review and approval by Division Chief and Bureau Director.
 - 4. Final issuance of Certificate of Competency will require the signature of the director of Bureau of Early Intervention Services of the OCDEL.
 - 5. The Certificate of Competency will be issued to the private provider agency with a copy of confirmation to the MAWA Supervisor.

II. Management and Maintenance of Information

- A. Individual requests and approvals will be kept on file at the Bureau of Early Intervention Services.
- B. Individuals who meet the requirements will receive a Certificate of Competency.
- C. Individuals who have received certifications in a specific agency will be reviewed annually. Agency directors will receive documentation listing employee names, social security numbers, and approved categories of certification in the month of July, due to OCDEL, BEIS by the last business day of September.

Individuals who receive a Certificate of Competency and who maintain employment in a private provider which provides early intervention services and programs, must comply with the following on a yearly basis:

The renewal process begins in the month of July of each program year. There are many excellent workshops, trainings, and conferences offered by the Early Intervention Technical Assistance Consultants and MAWA throughout the year. In addition, topics of importance to preschool staff and agency directors are accessible at various locations across the Commonwealth through distance learning. The three PaTTAN offices have a vast collection of videotapes from distance learning sessions as well as conferences. These tapes may be borrowed and viewed as additional continuing education. This activity must be monitored for hours and verified by the agency director as part of the documentation. Refer to On-Line credit information in the section of COC Renewals.

- D. This documentation must be reviewed and signed by the agency director attesting that the individuals are still employees in good standing.
- E. Bureau of Early Intervention Services must be notified of any employee or employees no longer with the agency. These employees will be deleted from the database. Once updates have been made, the document must be notarized and returned to OCDEL within 60 days. Failure to provide documentation on an annual basis will trigger a discontinuance of the certificates.
- F. A database including the names and agencies of these individuals will be kept on file in the Bureau of Early Intervention Services.

INITIAL APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY

DO NOT USE THIS FORM FOR RENEWALS

AGENCY NAME _____

AGENCY CONTACT PERSON _____

AGENCY CONTACT TITLE _____

AGENCY ADDRESS _____

AGENCY EMAIL ADDRESS _____

AGENCY PHONE NUMBER _____

MAWA WHICH SUBCONTRACTED WITH THE
AGENCY _____

MAWA CONTACT PERSON _____

EMPLOYEE NAME _____

WORK ADDRESS _____

LEVEL OF EDUCATION: Associate's Degree

Baccalaureate Degree--**List Type of Degree(s)** Graduate Degree

Existing PDE Certificate, List

Private Academic School Certificate

JOB TITLE _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF JOB RESPONSIBILITIES _____

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THIS AGENCY

(Must agree with information on notarized page)

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN EI {OR RELATED FIELD}

(Must agree with information on notarized page)

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT IF APPLICABLE and DATES OF EMPLOYMENT

Name and Address of Agency

_____ FROM: _____ TO: _____

_____ FROM: _____ TO: _____

_____ FROM: _____ TO: _____

CONTINUING EDUCATION – List dates, locations and course names

IN-SERVICE TRAINING – List dates, locations and workshop names

CONFERENCES ATTENDED – List dates, locations and conference titles

INDICATE UNDER WHICH CATEGORY OF REQUIREMENTS YOU ARE APPLYING FOR THIS CERTIFICATE

A B or C

ATTACH DOCUMENTATION AS SPECIFIED ABOVE

- I attest this individual has been employed by this agency for _____ years.
- I attest this individual has worked in the area of early intervention for _____ years.
- I attest this individual has met requirements of State Law for Health, Safety, and Criminal Background Check.
- I recommend this individual for the Certificate of Competency in Early Intervention.
- I attest to the competency of the individual recommended for the Certificate of Competency.

Date and Place

Signature of Applicant

Notary Public

Signature Agency Director

Date and Place

If any of these documents are not included when applicable, the application will be returned immediately without review. IMPORTANT: Please ✓ each of the boxes below prior to submission.

- Original Transcript(s)**
- Copies of certification, license or registration, if any**
- Copies of advertisements for certified Personnel, if available**
- Criminal Background Check**

Please submit applications to: Kathy Vradenburgh
 Department of Education
 Office of Child Development & Early Learning
 Finance, Administration and Planning
 333 Market Street, 6th Floor
 Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333