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Office of Behavioral Health

Division of Community Behavioral Health

Certified Addiction Counselor Clinical Training Program

Handbook for Addiction Counselors effective September 2021



Handbook for Addiction Counselors

effective September, 2021

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Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules

The Addiction Counselor Clinical Training Program Rules establish a standard of excellence in training addiction counselors in Colorado which include:

- Clarification of the core competencies expected of addiction counselors
- Prerequisites for specific required training classes
- Education requirements for each level
- Increased emphasis on clinical supervision preparation and practice
- National examination requirements for CAT, CAS and LAC
- Five-year limit on training classes
- Five-year limit on national exam

The Addiction Counselor Clinical Training Program is designed to train addiction counselors to work effectively within a variety of treatment settings and with a variety of addictive behaviors. The required training classes for certification have been updated and realigned. All required trainings are expected to incorporate evidence-based science-driven practices currently being utilized in the addiction treatment field. If prerequisites are required, every student will be required to present transcripts as proof of having taken the prerequisite.

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health Rules for Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure rules are undergoing revisions and it is advised to check periodically for the most current version:

<https://cdhs.colorado.gov/behavioral-health/laws-rules>

(click on browse rules at the Colorado Secretary of State website)



Addiction Counseling in Colorado

Certified and licensed addiction counselors possess a body of knowledge, skills, training and work experience in the treatment of addictive behaviors that distinguishes the addiction counseling profession from other health care professions. Preparation for a career as an addiction professional is available through OBH approved training and academic classes; skills development; clinically supervised work experience; and demonstration of knowledge by passing the required NAADAC exam. The potential applicant will need to access information from both the DORA and the OBH websites to create a career development plan.

Certification

Counselor certification is available to those individuals with various levels of academic preparation in the counseling field and is comprised of three levels:

- Certified Addiction Technician (CAT) is a credentialing level that requires a high school diploma, proof of passing the NCAC I exam, and completion of all requirements at the CAT level.
- Certified Addiction Specialist (CAS) is a credentialing level that requires a behavioral health bachelor's degree, proof of passing the NCAC II exam, and completion of all requirements at the CAT and CAS level.

Licensure

A Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC) is a credentialing level that requires a clinical behavioral health Master's degree, proof of passing the NAADAC MAC exam, and completion of all requirements for a CAT and CAS.

Certification and/or licensure for Addiction Counseling requires:

- Clinically Supervised Addiction Work Experience.
- Addiction Specific Training and Education.
- Proof of passing the designated NAADAC National Examination.
- Proof of passing the Mental Health Jurisprudence Examination.



**Colorado Office of Behavioral Health (OBH)
Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA)
NAADAC: The Association for Addiction Professionals
Colorado Association of Addiction Professionals (CAAP)**

OBH

The Colorado Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) is located in the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). OBH is responsible for the management and oversight of the Certified Addiction Counselor (CAC) Clinical Training Program and establishes the education, training, supervised work experience standards and requirements for the addiction professional workforce.

<https://cdhs.colorado.gov/behavioral-health/workforce-development>

DORA

The Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) is the state agency that regulates the behavioral health professions in Colorado and is responsible for the registration, certification and licensure of addiction counselors. DORA establishes fees, evaluates the qualifications of applicants; approves certification and licensure for qualified practitioners; and investigates grievances against mental health professionals.

<https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor>

NAADAC

NAADAC is the Association that advocates for addiction counseling professionals and service providers nationally and internationally. NAADAC's Mission "is to lead, unify and empower addiction focused professionals to achieve excellence through education, advocacy, knowledge, standards of practice, ethics, professional development and research." NAADAC has thousands of members and state affiliates in most states, provides relevant membership benefits, publishes the magazine "Addiction Professional" and the newsletter "NAADAC News." NAADAC offers national credentialing for addiction services providers (see below for details) and develops national examinations that can be used by any state as a requirement for state certification or licensure as is the case in Colorado. www.naadac.org

CAAP

CAAP is the Colorado state affiliate of NAADAC. CAAP is also known as the Society of Addiction Counselors of Colorado (SACC). CAAP represents the addiction counseling workforce in Colorado and is committed to offering its members many benefits, including educational opportunities and training and increased professional standing via representation at the local, state and national levels. Membership in NAADAC automatically confers membership in CAAP.

www.caap.us



Information every addiction counselor applicant needs to know:

Legal name and registration for courses

An individual shall verify registrations and applications have their legal name to assure consistency. Following this procedure avoids possible rejection of an application by DORA due to the use of nicknames, partial names, initials, etc.

Training Class Time Limit: Five-Year Rule Clarification

All required CAC training courses must be submitted to DORA within **five (5) years** of the date of training. *For example, a training completed on April 1, 2020 would expire on April 1, 2025. If the required training expires prior to submitting an application to DORA, the applicant shall retake and complete the training again.*

Course Attendance

All addiction counselor course work is to be completed by the participant in the time-frame of the course. If there is a lapse in class time, online or live, the participant will need to retake the course in its entirety.

Prerequisites for Courses

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure prerequisites are met before enrolling in any course. Courses requiring prerequisites are:

- **Group Counseling Skills**
Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills
- **Motivational Interviewing**
Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills
- **Advanced Case Conceptualization**
Prerequisite: Case Conceptualization and Documentation
- **Advanced Motivational Interviewing**
Prerequisite: Motivational Interviewing
- **Advanced Pharmacology**
Prerequisite: Pharmacology I
- **Clinical Supervision I**
Prerequisites: Addiction Counseling Skills, Group Counseling Skills, Motivational Interviewing, and Advanced Motivational Interviewing
- **Clinical Supervision II**
Prerequisite: Clinical Supervision I
- **Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice**
Prerequisite: Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment



An applicant who successfully completed the following courses **between 3-31-2016 and 3-31-2021** will have the courses accepted **without** the required prerequisite of Addiction Counseling Skills for CAT certification:

- ❖ Group Counseling Skills
- ❖ Motivational Interviewing

Degree Evaluation:

- **Bachelor's Degree:** Submission of a Bachelor's degree for certification at a CAS level must be in a behavioral health sciences specialty, with a focus on psychological, behavioral, social and cultural factors, and applies knowledge and tools in behavioral theory, research, assessment, program planning, and counseling. Generally, a human services, social work, or psychology degree will contain these elements but a sociology, nursing, or criminal justice degree will not. If you believe your degree qualifies, further information will be required of you, which may include an Educational Equivalency review from the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) <https://www.cce-global.org/> This will likely extend the review time needed for your application.

- **Master's Degree or Doctorate:** Submission of a clinical behavioral health Master's degree or Doctorate is required. Appropriate degrees include: community counseling, human services counseling, marriage and family therapy, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, human psychology, clinical social work, psychiatric nursing/advanced practice nursing, and addictionologist - addiction medicine. Third party payers, licensure and certification boards, and regulatory organizations require degrees that have counseling courses specific to assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning, treatment, theories, skills, practicum, internship, etc. If you have a different degree but believe it meets the criteria, further information will be required of you, which may include an Educational Equivalency review from the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) <https://www.cce-global.org/> This will likely extend the review time needed for your application.



LAC application with an active Master Addiction Counselor (MAC)

Individuals with an active Master Addiction Counselor (MAC) credential issued from NAADAC seeking the LAC, must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
 - Complete the LAC application, uploading MAC credential and number
 - Copy of letter/email from NAADAC indicating MAC credential is valid and the expiration date
 - Taking the MAC exam is **not** required as the MAC credential is already awarded
-

CAS application with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor II (NCAC II)

Individuals with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor II (NCAC II) credential issued from NAADAC seeking the CAS, must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
 - Complete the CAS application, uploading NCAC II credential and number
 - Copy of letter/email from NAADAC indicating NCAC II credential is valid and the expiration date
 - Taking the NCAC II exam is **not** required as the NCAC II credential is already awarded
-

CAT application with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor I (NCAC I)

Individuals with an active National Certified Addiction Counselor I (NCAC I) credential issued from NAADAC seeking the CAT, must successfully complete the following requirements:

- Pass the Jurisprudence exam, if the individual has not passed it in the past 12 months
- Complete the CAT application, uploading NCAC I credential and number
- Copy of letter/email from NAADAC indicating NCAC I credential is valid and the expiration date
- Taking the NCAC I exam is **not** required as the NCAC I credential is already awarded



Field Experience for Non-conforming Clinical Behavioral Health Master’s Degrees:

Eligible participants will complete a Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE) review for the confirmed Master’s degree. If the determination is all areas of the Master’s degree requirement are met, **EXCEPT** the internship/practicum requirement, the participant would provide a copy of the CCE letter to the CAC Clinical Training Program Manager.

Upon approval, the CAC Clinical Training Program Manager will provide the participant with a list of the OBH Approved Clinical Supervisor for the Field Experience. The participant will have 12 months from the date of approval to complete the hours.

Internship/Practicum Hours Required: 100 hours practicum, 600 hours internship

- CAC Course to be completed with an OBH Approved Trainer (completion covers requirements for the 100 practicum hours).

The following CAC Courses can be completed concurrently with internship hours, and taken within six months prior to the application:

- ❖ Addiction Counseling Skills
 - ❖ Group Counseling Skills
 - ❖ Motivational Interviewing
- Internship: 600 hours clinically supervised work experience, with an on-site clinical supervisor for addiction treatment (LAC).

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Institutions of Higher Learning:

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a written agreement between OBH and an Institution of Higher Learning indicating an established and approved addiction training curriculum is offered. A student completing and passing coursework under the established MOU will submit their transcript to DORA without having to register in the CERTS database or completing a CCE educational review.

Students shall contact the Institution of Higher Learning to determine if there is an established MOU with OBH.



Certification Educational Requirements Tracking System (CERTS)

The Certification Educational Requirements Tracking System (CERTS) is an online software application contracted by the State of Colorado to track the successful completion of Addiction Counselor training courses. The CERTS maintains a transcript for every registered student.

As of January 1, 2018 all individuals seeking certification or licensure for addiction counseling are to be registered in CERTS and have a CERTS ID number entered into the student profile to get credit for any addiction courses attended and passed (this does not include courses on a college transcript).

To register with CERTS: <http://www.colorado-certs.com> and click the “Register” button.

CERTS Update as of April 1 2021

While previously CERTS utilized a per-certification-level fee structure, it now employs a per-course fee structure. Students purchase the specific courses that they need CERTS to track for them, so the overall cost of CERTS will depend on the students’ specific needs.

Students that registered prior to April 1, 2021, and are still in the process of pursuing certification, will need to convert the obsolete certification tracks to the new rules tracks for CERTS to track the correct course requirements. Students may use the “contact customer support” feature of CERTS for assistance.



Clinically Supervised Addiction Work Experience Hours

- CAT - 1,000 hours of clinically supervised addiction work experience supervised by a CAS or LAC that cannot be completed in fewer than six months.
(Does not require DORA registration prior to the 1000 hours).
- CAS - 3,000 hours of clinically supervised addiction work experience supervised by a CAS or LAC that cannot be completed in fewer than eighteen months. This may include the hours required for certification as a CAT.
- LAC - 2,000 hours of clinically supervised addiction work experience by a LAC or other qualified supervisor.*
**Other qualified supervisor means a behavioral health professional with demonstrated competence equivalent to a LAC in addiction treatment by education and experience, clinical Master's degree or above, and documented minimum of 2,000 hours of addiction counseling work experience.*

Clinical Supervision Required

Credential Working Towards	High School/GED Completion: Hours per month** of Supervision Required	Bachelor's Degree conferred: Hours per month** of Supervision Required*	Master's Degree Conferred: Hours of Supervision Required*	Master's level students enrolled in an internship or practicum
CAT	3	3	n/a	n/a
CAS	n/a	3	2	2
LAC	n/a	n/a	2	2

* If degree is not yet conferred, supervision hours per month must equal 3 hours for full time work.

**See rules for prorating less than full-time work.



National Exam Requirement

All applicants for a CAT, CAS and LAC are required to take and pass a NAADAC national examination approved by OBH. Proof of passing the exam must be submitted to DORA with the certification/licensure application. A national examination taken and passed has an expiration date of **five (5) years** prior to the received date of application to DORA.

NAADAC Examinations

OBH endorses the use of three examinations sponsored by NAADAC:

- NCAC I: National Certified Addiction Counselor, Level I
(used for CAT requirement)
- NCAC II: National Certified Addiction Counselor, Level II
(used for CAS requirement)
- MAC: Master Addiction Counselor (Master's level only)
(used for LAC requirement)

CAAP's website, www.caap.us, has options for preparing for the national exams to include in-person workshops, online classes, and study guides that may be purchased. To take one of the national exams, register and make payment through CAAP on their website.

Recommendations:

- Those individuals who have graduated with a clinical Master's degree or above should take the MAC regardless of whether they apply for a CAS or LAC.
- Selection of which national examination should be taken depends on the applicant's professional development plan, level of academic degree, and long-term career goals.

Reminder: There is no national credential awarded or needed when applying to take one of these NAADAC sponsored exams. Successfully passing the required examination for State of Colorado requirements does not constitute national certification from NAADAC.



DORA Database Listing Requirements for Addiction Counselors

The Colorado Mental Health Practice Act is the law that regulates and defines the practice of psychotherapy in Colorado. The law states that all persons who engage in activities that meet the psychotherapy practice definition must be regulated by the DORA. Regulation means holding a Colorado clinical behavioral health credential awarded by DORA, either by certification or licensure.

First 1000 hours:

- ✓ Individuals working towards CAT do not have to register with DORA prior to submission of application.
- ✓ Once the 1000 hours are met, the individual is not able to count hours or facilitate psychoeducational groups independently until the CAT is officially approved

Addiction Counselor Candidate:

- ✓ **By Endorsement:** One year for candidate with an active addiction credential from another state to meet the requirements for level applying for (CAT, CAS or LAC)
- ✓ **Master's or Doctorate Student:** Four years to meet requirements for LAC (or be registered in another Mental Health category)

Exemptions: Pursuant to § 12-43-215(8), C.R.S., employees of community mental health centers are exempted from the database registration requirement. More information is available at <https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/Laws>

Remember: At any point in time when an individual engages in activities that meet the definition of psychotherapy practice, regardless of status, they must be listed and regulated by DORA.



Requirements for Certified Addiction Technician (CAT)

<p>HS diploma/GED)</p>	<p>Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours: 1000 <i>(does not require DORA registration prior to the 1000 hours)</i></p> <p>Pass the NCAC I Exam</p> <p>Pass the Jurisprudence Exam https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/ApplicationsDocs</p>	<p>Nine (9) addiction specialty trainings</p> <p>Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)</p> <p>Case Conceptualization & Documentation (14 hrs)</p> <p>Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)</p> <p>Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)</p> <p>Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)</p> <p>Pharmacology I (14 hrs)</p> <p>Trauma-Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)</p> <p>Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills</i></p> <p>Group Counseling Skills (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills</i></p> <p>Total training hours: 154</p>
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Requirements for Certified Addiction Specialist (must meet requirements for CAT)

<p>Behavioral Health Bachelor Degree</p> <p><i>Non-conforming Bachelor's degree approval will be decided at the discretion of the Addiction Board</i></p>	<p>Bachelor's degree: Behavioral Health specialty (Psychology, Social Work, Human Services)</p>	<p><i>Bachelor's degree or higher in Substance Use Disorders/Addiction and/or related counseling subjects (social work, mental health counseling, marriage & family, psychology) from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.</i></p>
	<p>Approved to provide Clinical Supervision and consultation to individuals working towards CAT or CAS</p>	
	<p>Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 direct clinically supervised hours <i>(may include the hours required for the CAT)</i> <p>Pass the NCAC II exam</p> <p>Pass the jurisprudence exam https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/ApplicationsDocs</p> <p>Total Training Hours: 161</p>	<p>Eleven (11) specialty trainings</p> <p>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (14 hrs)</p> <p>Co-occurring Disorders (14 hrs)</p> <p>Advanced Treatment Models (14 hrs)</p> <p>Treating Diverse Populations (14 hrs)</p> <p>Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14hrs)</p> <p>Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment</i></p> <p>Advanced Case Conceptualization (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Case Conceptualization and Documentation</i></p> <p>Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Pharmacology I</i></p> <p>Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisite: Motivational Interviewing</i></p> <p>Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs) <i>Prerequisites: Addiction Counseling Skills, Group Counseling Skills, Motivational Interviewing, and Advanced Motivational Interviewing</i></p> <p>Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs) <i>Prerequisites: Advanced Motivational Interviewing and Clinical Supervision I</i></p>



Licensed Addiction Counselor

As of July 1, 2021, HB21-1305 went into effect which requires the State Board of Human Services, Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) to promulgate rules that include education requirements for licensed addiction counselors. These rules are not complete and pursuant to 12-245-801(1.5), C.R.S., an individual has the ability to petition the State Board of Addiction Counselors to have the education requirements for the LAC be waived.

Anticipated date for the rules is on or before March 1, 2022

Requirements for Licensed Addiction Counselor (LAC)

<p>Clinical behavioral health Master or Doctorate degree</p> <p><i>Non-conforming Master's or Doctorate degree approval will be decided at the discretion of the Addiction Board</i></p>		<p><i>Master's degree or higher in Substance Use Disorders/Addiction and/or related counseling subjects (social work, mental health counseling, marriage & family, psychology, medical doctor) from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.</i></p>
	<p>Clinically Supervised Work Experience Hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2,000 direct clinically supervised hours <p>Pass the MAC exam</p> <p>Pass the jurisprudence exam https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/ApplicationsDocs</p> <p>Designated providers of Clinical Supervision for all levels of certification and licensure, in the addictions profession</p>	



Education Equivalency for Addiction Counselor Certification

When an applicant submits college courses on an application to the Center for Credentialing & Education (CCE) in lieu of one of the required training classes, it is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate how their college course is equivalent to the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) approved core competencies for that class. They are advised to compare the class syllabus to the core competency for the CAC required class. Anyone wishing to use college equivalents must submit the following to CCE (*please be advised this process can take 4-6 weeks*):

- An official transcript from an accredited college or university in a sealed envelope. The courses must be in a behavioral health science or field. Each college class being offered as the equivalent of a CAC training class must have a grade of C or above.
- A cover letter with an attached syllabus and a written description about why the college class is equivalent to the CAC required class.
- A college course must offer college credits that are equivalent or greater than the number of clock hours required for the OBH training class.

Additional information is available on the CCE website:

<http://www.cce-global.org/Assets/StateLicensure/COappAddictionCounselors.pdf>

College equivalency hours:

- One semester credit hour = 15 clock hours
- Two semester credit hours = 30 clock hours
- Three semester credit hours = 45 clock hours
- One quarter credit hour = 8.5 clock hours
- Two quarter credit hours = 17 clock hours
- Three quarter credit hours = 25.5 clock hours

CAC required courses that must be taken (No college course equivalency):

- Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)
- Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)
- Pharmacology I (14 hrs)
- Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs)
- Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14 hrs)
- Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs)
- Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs)



**CAC required courses that may have college equivalency
(See core competencies posted on the OBH website)**

<https://cdhs.colorado.gov/behavioral-health/workforce-development>

(Click on Certified Addiction Counselor Clinical Training Program, click on Core Competencies for CAC Required Training Classes)

- Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)
- Case Conceptualization and Documentation (14 hrs)
- Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)
- Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)
- Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs)
- Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs)
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (14 hrs)
- Advanced Case Conceptualization (14 hrs)
- Co-Occurring Disorders (14 hrs)
- Group Counseling Skills (21 hrs)
- Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)
- Advanced Treatment Models (14 hrs)
- Treating Diverse Populations (14 hrs)



Course Descriptions of the Required CAC Clinical Training Program Courses

Required Trainings for CAT

Addiction Counseling Skills, Case Conceptualization and Documentation, and Principles of Addiction Treatment are the three courses that make up the Core Curriculum and are basic to the foundational training of a beginning addiction counselor.

- **Addiction Counseling Skills (21 hrs)**
Along with Principles of Addiction Treatment and Case Conceptualization and Documentation (aka Client Record Management), Addiction Counseling Skills is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of an addiction counselor. The purpose of this class is to provide a framework and counseling model for working with clients with substance misuse and addiction. The focus of this course is to teach the counseling skills needed to help clients process their information and move toward the change process. The models utilized are client-centered, counselor-directed therapy along with motivational spirit of counseling. Recording and feedback will assist the participants in developing a standard level of counseling skills proficiency.
- **Case Conceptualization and Documentation (14 hrs)**
Along with Principles of Addiction Treatment and Addiction Counseling Skills, Case Conceptualization and Documentation, is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of an addiction counselor. This class is designed to provide the counselor with an understanding of the clinical record and the continuum of client care that the record documents and tracks. The class presents screening, basic assessment and evaluation, Substance Use Disorder diagnostic criteria, ASAM patient placement criteria, introduction to treatment planning, progress note completion, documentation requirements and basic referral and discharge planning. It emphasizes the confidentiality of the client record and includes releases of information, mandatory disclosure and informed consent, among others.
- **Culturally Informed Treatment (14 hrs)**
This class will provide a basic foundation for understanding how cultural competence, awareness, and sensitivity can improve quality of care and increase positive outcomes. The professional counselor has an obligation to understand the client’s context and learn to communicate in a manner that the client is likely to be able to hear, understand and accept. The counselor must have the courage and insight to explore their own biases and misconceptions of others with cultural and ethnic differences. Cultural variables to be considered will include age, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, language, educational level, physical ability, economic status and social class as well as racial and ethnic backgrounds, all of which can be influential in the therapeutic process. Individual differences when considered in a cultural context can become strengths and resources for recovery.



- **Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)**
This training will focus on professional and ethical issues specific to the practice of addiction counseling and the treatment of co-occurring disorders. This training will build and strengthen the trainee’s knowledge of NAADAC’s Code of Ethics, and federal and state rules and regulations that are essential for safe practice. In this training, trainees will be exposed to the Colorado Mental Health Practice Act including the prohibited activities, 42 CFR Part 2, and HIPAA that regulate the practice of psychotherapy including addiction counseling. Trainees will learn about the important roles and activities of OBH (Office of Behavioral Health) and DORA (Department of Regulatory Agencies). In this training, trainees will learn the process of certification and credentialing to legally practice in Colorado. There will be an emphasis on developing critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills. Trainees will learn about the differences between privacy and confidentiality, and exceptions to confidentiality.
- **Group Counseling Skills (21 hrs)**
(Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills)
Group therapy is a powerful tool in delivering addiction treatment services. Groups have many therapeutic elements and effects that draw people into the culture of recovery. Groups provide useful information, allow one or two therapists, depending on group size, to facilitate the group process which helps a number of clients simultaneously, and provides positive peer support and pressure for recovery. This class will help the aspiring addiction counselor to understand the use of group therapy in the addiction treatment field and be able to demonstrate the skills necessary to facilitate a therapy group. The class will focus on the group process and will discuss diversity within groups as well as the many challenges a group leader may face. The class will also present models of effective group practice.
- **Motivational Interviewing (21 hrs)**
(Prerequisite: Addiction Counseling Skills)
“Motivational interviewing is a client-centered collaborative style of conversation designed to strengthen a person’s motivation for and commitment to change. MI is counselor-guided in that the counselor is skilled at managing ambivalence, eliciting change-talk and honoring the client’s autonomy about taking the next step toward a commonly agreed-upon goal” (Miller & Rollnick, 2014). Over 1500 studies to date have demonstrated the effectiveness of motivational interviewing at increasing client engagement, retention, compliance and improving treatment outcomes. Motivational Interviewing is an evidenced-based counseling approach used to assist individuals to identify their readiness, willingness, and ability to make change. The CAC Clinical Training Program at the Colorado Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) is committed to a process of integrating the Motivational Interviewing style, spirit and strategies into all levels of training and to support clinical supervision of motivational interviewing as a counseling style.
- **Pharmacology I (14 hrs)**
Training in pharmacology is a cornerstone of addiction counseling and a major part of what differentiates the professional field of addiction counseling from other mental health disciplines. This class will provide a solid base of knowledge about the drugs of abuse including what is happening in human physiology and behaviors.



- **Principles of Addiction Treatment (21 hrs)**
Along with Addiction Counseling Skills and Case Conceptualization and Documentation, Principles of Addiction Treatment is considered to be part of the “Core Curriculum” and basic to the foundational training of an addiction counselor. This class presents the models of addiction, defines and outlines various types of addiction treatment, presents the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) principles of effective treatment and reviews the use of evidence-based treatment approaches. The competencies required of an addiction counselor and scope of practice will be reviewed along with applicable rules and professional readiness.
- **Trauma Informed Care for Diverse Populations (14 hrs)**
Trauma Informed Care is a treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. The clinical shift is from “what’s wrong with you” to “what happened to you.” The need to address trauma is increasingly viewed as an important component of effective behavioral health service delivery. This class will introduce the counselor to the concept of trauma-informed care, and define ways in which a traditional treatment setting can be modified to increase and individual’s sense of safety within this setting. Participants will learn how to incorporate trauma-informed practices into substance use disorder treatment with diverse populations, such as military veterans, gender specific, people with co-occurring disorders, persons involved in the criminal justice system, etc. Although trauma treatment approaches will be considered, this class will not teach how to do trauma specific treatment.

Required Trainings for CAS:

- **Advanced Case Conceptualization (14 hrs)**
(Prerequisite is Case Conceptualization and Documentation)
Client motivation and commitment to treatment begins with the assessment and diagnostic phase that typically occurs at intake. This course will consider the differences between screening and assessment and use of assessment instruments. The class will consider the components of the clinical assessment such as a biopsychosocial interview, assessing risk for self-harm, identifying cultural needs and supports, problem domains, determining stage of readiness for change and strengths of the client. Determining diagnosis utilizing the DSM 5 and resulting level of care for the client will be discussed using the ASAM Criteria. Stages of treatment and systems of care will be covered along with facets of treatment planning.
- **Advanced Motivational Interviewing (14 hrs)**
(Prerequisite is Motivational Interviewing)
This two-day class of skill development in Advanced Motivational Interviewing will initially offer a brief review of the fundamental spirit, processes and skills of MI, and then focus intensively on clinical skills development. The training is designed to assist the counselor to develop and practice skills to assist clients to identify and strengthen intrinsic motivation for positive change. This is an advanced course in Motivational Interviewing so it is expected that the participant will be able to demonstrate the foundational MI skills by conducting a client interview using the OARSI, and responding to no-change talk (resistance). The format will be interactive and experiential in nature. Participants will be afforded an opportunity to obtain



focused practice and will receive individualized feedback regarding their MI skills with student and trainer ratings.

- **Advanced Pharmacology (14 hrs)**

(Prerequisite is Pharmacology I)

Neuroscience and genetic research on addiction continues to make significant progress toward understanding the changes in the brain that underlie drug use and behaviors. The research has the potential to significantly affect both the way in which we think about addiction, and those that suffer from it. Addictive drugs have habit-forming actions that can be localized to a variety of brain regions that can activate the reward circuitry in the brain. This class will explore the neurobiological basis of addiction and how addictive drugs produce neurochemical changes in the brain's reward pathway. It will also explore new technologies for treatment and prevention based on brain science. Additionally, functional changes to the brain and the brain's ability to recover after exposure to drugs of abuse, medical problems associated with substance abuse, and the use of pharmacological assists in recovery will be discussed.

- **Advanced Professional and Ethical Practice (14 hrs)**

(Prerequisite is Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment)

This two-day training addresses organizational ethics and practices, individual provider ethics and practices, and guidelines for setting up a private practice. Topics will include OBH licensing rules; OBH behavioral health rules and regulations; practice standards and guidelines; DORA and the Mental Health Practice Act; the purpose of and the need for written policies and procedures; professional competencies, boundaries and ethical relationships; reporting violations; employee drug testing; liability insurance; clinical versus administrative supervision; the ethical delivery of culturally-responsive care and trauma-informed care; and the need for a professional self-care plan. This training builds on the Ethical Practice in Addiction Treatment training as well as the clinical supervision trainings.

- **Advanced Treatment Models (14 hrs)**

This class is designed to provide an overview of the specialized models of counseling for behavioral health environment that provide services to co-occurring mental health and addiction interventions. The purpose of this class is to provide information and instruction into those advanced models so that clinical supervisors will have the basic knowledge required to provide adequate support and supervision for these models. The focus of this course is to teach the structure, purpose, appropriate population, and practice details of each model that is covered in the training.

- **Clinical Supervision I (21 hrs)**

(Prerequisites are Addiction Counseling Skills, Group Counseling Skills, Motivational Interviewing, Advanced Motivational Interviewing)

Clinical supervision is the process by which the clinical practice provided by the counselor is evaluated and either modified or approved by the supervisor, providing a bridge between the classroom and the clinical work. Clinical supervision is a central organizing activity that integrates the program mission, goals and treatment philosophy with clinical theory and evidence-based practices. This class prepares the addiction counselor with basic supervision tools and models to use as a standard of practice to include: models of supervision, counselor developmental level, cultural



and contextual factors, ethical and legal issues, monitoring performance of the supervisee, methods of observation, practice issues in clinical supervision, and documentation issues. The CAC Clinical Training Program is committed to a process of improving the quality of client care and developing the professionalism of clinical personnel. This three-day class includes demonstration skills practice and critique.

- **Clinical Supervision II (14 hrs)**

(Prerequisites are Advanced Motivational Interviewing & Clinical Supervision I)

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an evidence-based tool used intentionally along the entire continuum of care from prevention through recovery, in the work of substance use and process addictions. The key to supporting the consistent use of the Motivational Interviewing (MI) model in counseling and service provision is supervisory coaching and feedback. The aim of this training is to teach clinicians and other service providers who already have acquired MI skills, and who have or will have a supervisory role, how to observe and coach their supervisees in the proper application of these skills in diverse and integrated care environment. MITI 4.2.1 (Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity Coding Manual 4.2.1 is a template provided by MINT (<https://motivationalinterviewing.org/motivational-interviewing-resources>) for training supervisees to use MI in joining and engaging the client and improving client commitment to treatment during and following screening and assessment. Using the framework of this scoring and feedback technique, training participants will practice effective coaching and supervisory skills to help team leaders, managers and supervisors work with their staff to incorporate their MI skills more often and consistently. There will be an emphasis on MI interview rating systems and general interview rating etiquette. Participants will discuss how to use feedback to coach supervisees, practical guidelines for MI supervision, how to code in a manner that enhances clinical supervision and implementation considerations.

- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) (14 hrs)**

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is a treatment approach that has gained widespread application in the treatment of addictions and mental disorders. Several important features of CBT make it particularly promising as a treatment for substance abuse and dependence. CBT has been extensively researched and has solid empirical support as an evidence-based treatment for addictions. CBT is structured, goal-oriented, and focused on the immediate problems faced by substance abusers entering treatment who are struggling to control their substance use. It is a flexible, individualized approach that can be adapted to a wide range of clients and a wide range of treatment settings and formats. CBT works well with individuals as well as group therapy. Participants in this course will learn and practice effective ways to integrate tools specific to CBT in a comprehensive treatment strategy.

- **Co-Occurring Disorders (14 hrs)**

This class presents the basics of working with clients with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. There is a growing need to recognize and address the interrelationship of these disorders, along with the medical implications for the client, through the use of specialized approaches and integration of treatment. This class will address clinical assessment, treatment philosophy, strategies, and guidelines to provide integrated treatment with co-occurring disorders. It will include an introduction to the DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for the mental disorders most often seen



with substance use and behavioral addiction disorders, along with a discussion of the changes to substance use diagnosis with DSM-5. The essential values, attitudes, and competencies of the counselor working with this population are discussed.

- **Infectious Diseases in Addiction Treatment (14 hrs)**

Drug and alcohol abuse can increase an individual's susceptibility to contract and spread infectious diseases, including STDs and blood borne illnesses. Drug use is linked to risky behaviors such as needle sharing and unsafe sex and can also weaken the immune system. This combination greatly increases the likelihood of contracting HIV, hepatitis, and other infectious diseases. Understanding of infectious diseases that might affect individuals who are addicted to alcohol and other substances is a cornerstone of addiction counseling. This class will help prepare addiction professionals to identify such diseases, determine individual risk for infection, educate individuals about disease prevention and treatment options, and assist individuals in obtaining appropriate treatment as needed.

- **Treating Diverse Populations (14 hrs)**

Addiction counselors work to improve people's lives by identifying and treating the effects of substance abuse disorders. Addiction counselors may work with people from the general public or they may specialize in specific populations, such as gender specific, persons involved in the criminal justice system, families, LGBTQIA, veterans and the opioid overuse epidemic. This course will provide a more in depth overview of the diverse populations in the addiction treatment realm.