

INCUMBENT CERTIFICATION FACT SHEET

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Overview of Certification Process.

Overview of Certification Process

The intent of the Incumbent Certification process is to provide staff the professional development needed to ensure effective job performance and to promote quality service provision to children and families. County management staff should use the certification assessment results to identify areas of strength and areas of need, and as a guide in working with staff on needed professional development activities.

Incumbent Case Manager

Social services case managers **hired before April 1, 2004** were required to attain certification through Fast Track, Validation Study or the Incumbent Certification process. The Incumbent Certification process **does not** apply to case managers **hired after April 1, 2004**. Those case managers should have gone through New Worker Training & Certification process to attain certification.

Incumbent Supervisor:

Social services supervisors **hired (or promoted to position) before November 14, 2005** were required to attain certification through Fast Track, Validation Study or the Incumbent Certification process. The Incumbent Certification process **does not** apply to new supervisors hired (or promoted) **after November 14, 2005**. Those supervisors should have gone through the "New Supervisor Training" process to attain certification.

For more information contact:

- New Case Manager Training & Certification: Pat Douglas @ 404-651-5243
- New Supervisor Training & Certification: Mimi Tarpley-Benkoski @ 404-550-7915
- Training Waivers for New Case Managers: Adell Moore @ 706-738-6115

Employees listed below are not required to participate in the Incumbent Certification process:

- Workers in Resource Development who do not carry a DFCS caseload (i.e. Foster Care caseload with children).
- Workers in Telephone Intake.
- Workers in Diversion.
- Any worker who does not carry a caseload or supervise a worker carrying a caseload.
- Directors, Field Program Specialists, Administrators, Training Coordinators, Social Services Technicians

PHASE I - Fast Track Certification

During Phase I, social services case managers and supervisors who provided social services or social services supervision for a TOTAL of five years as of April 1, 2004 AND received

satisfactory performance evaluations were eligible for Fast Track Certification. The *Fast Track Application*, approved by the supervisor, county director, and regional director, must be forwarded to Education & Training Service Section for processing.

PHASE II - Validation Study

During Phase II, a group of case managers and supervisors were selected by the counties to participate in the Validation Study. The purpose of the Validation Study was to validate a three-tiered assessment process, which included: completion of the online knowledge assessment; a case review of documentation skills; and a field-based observation. Since the Validation Study replicated the actual certification process, those participants who successfully completed all three assessments were deemed certified. Employees who did not successfully complete all three assessments were required to retake any failed assessments during Phase III- Incumbent Certification, which began April 2005.

PHASE III - Incumbent Certification Process

During Phase III, social services case managers and supervisors who did not participate in Fast Track or the Validation Study were required to participate in the Incumbent Certification process which includes: completion of the online knowledge assessment; a case review of documentation skills; and a field-based observation. All assessments should have been completed by January 1, 2006, with the record reviews and observations forwarded to the Education and Training Services Section.

2. Who should I contact if I have questions about the Incumbent Certification Process?

The counties/regions have identified a Field Liaison to serve as lead person and to assist the counties/regions with questions regarding the Incumbent Certification Process. The Field Liaison is responsible for coordinating communications regarding incumbent certification between Education and Training Services Section and the counties/regions, collecting assessments, and ensuring that assessments are forwarded to the Education & Training Services Section for evaluation/scoring.

3. When is the deadline for the incumbent certification process?

January 1, 2006 was the deadline for all incumbents to have completed all assessments at least once. March 31, 2006 is the deadline to complete any retakes of failed assessments. (Online Knowledge assessment, Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool).

4. Where should I send the Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool for evaluating/scoring?

Mail or fax assessments to the Education & Training Services Section:

Julie York, RPD Unit Manager
Education & Training Services Section
Two Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 25.453
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
(404) 657-4058 (fax)

5. When will I receive notification of my certification status?

Employees who have completed all required certification assessments (Online Knowledge Assessment, Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool) will be notified of their certification status within 4-6 weeks after all required assessments have been submitted for scoring. Employees are notified whether they are Certified and placed in Exemplary or Pass Status, or Not Certified and placed in Remedial or Probationary Status. Employees placed in Remedial and Probationary Status will be required to retake any failed assessments. Employees will receive feedback related to specific areas of the Online Knowledge Assessment, Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool that they failed. Employees should use this feedback to prepare for retaking any failed assessments. In addition, employees may access the Online Training Modules designed to help prepare for retaking failed assessments and/or work with their supervisors on developing a Professional Development Plan in preparation for retaking failed assessments.

6. How can I access the certification assessment tools?

Visit the Education & Training Services Section website at <http://www.gadfcs.org/dfcs.php> to download these documents:

- Field Liaison Contact List/Incumbent Certification Process
- Incumbent Certification Fact Sheet
- Resources for Online Knowledge Assessments
- Online Knowledge Assessment Manual
- Case Record Review Tool
- Field-Based Observation Tool
- Fast Track Application

7. Are there different online materials?

Yes, there were several different online materials. However, only the **Online Knowledge Assessment** is required as part of the Validation Study, Supervisor Pilot and Incumbent Certification process. Below is a description of each online material:

- **Online Knowledge Assessment:** (<http://cwte.louisville.edu/GAonline/GA2/index.htm>)
This online test is required for incumbent certification. There are five parts of the online test: Foundation, CPS Intake/Investigation, CPS Ongoing, Foster Care, and Adoptions. As part of the certification process, employees are required to complete the Foundation section and the section relevant to their specific program area(s). For example, employees working in Foster Care will be required to take the Foundation test and the Foster Care test.
- **Online Training Modules** (<http://cwte.louisville.edu/GAonline/home.html>)
The online training modules, developed by the certification contractor, are designed to help employees working in Foster Care prepare for retaking failed assessments.
- **DFCS Online Training** (<http://www.gadfcs.org/training>)
The online training modules are designed to help employees prepare for the certification assessments in CPS and Foster Care.
- **Online Self-Assessment:** (<http://cwte.louisville.edu/ga2.htm>)

The online self assessment was administered in 2004. The online self-assessment was designed to assess current knowledge, skills and abilities in preparation for the certification process. The self-assessment is no longer available.

8. Process for completing the Online Knowledge Assessment (Incumbent Certification).

Complete the Foundation test and the section of the online test relevant to your program area(s). For example, if you work in Foster Care, you will need to complete the Foundation test and Foster Care test of the Online Knowledge Assessment. For retakes, employees placed in Remedial or Probationary Status due to failing the Online Knowledge Assessment, are required to retake the Foundation test and the section of the online test relevant to their program area(s). For example, if you work in Foster Care and failed the Foster Care test of the Online Knowledge Assessment, you will be required to retake the Foundation test and Foster Care test of the Online Knowledge Assessment.

9. Process for completing the Case Record Review (Incumbent Certification).

For Case Manager:

The Field Program Specialist (FPS) assigned to the county/region or another supervisor outside of the line of supervision (not immediate supervisor) would be the reviewer for the Case Record Review. The FPS or supervisor will review a case assigned to the case manager, complete the Case Record Review, and forward the assessment to the Education & Training Services Section for evaluation/scoring. The FPS or supervisor should complete only the section(s) of the Case Record Review relevant to the program area(s) for which the employee is seeking certification. For example, if the employee works in Foster Care, the FPS or supervisor should complete the Foster Care section of the Case Record Review. You should write N/A or draw a line through the other sections. Employees will receive notification of their certification status within 4-6 weeks after all required certification assessments have been evaluated.

For Supervisor:

The Field Program Specialist and the supervisor (being evaluated) will review a case assigned to a case manager under the supervision of the supervisor being evaluated. The supervisor will complete the "first level case review" and the FPS will complete the "second level case review on the **same case**". Both FPS and supervisor should complete only the section(s) of the Case Record Review relevant to the case manager's program area(s). For example, if the case manager works in Foster Care, the FPS and supervisor must complete the Foster Care section of the Case Record Review only. You should write N/A or draw a line through the other sections. The completed assessments should be forwarded to the Education & Training Services Section to be scored. Employees will receive notification of their certification status within 4-6 weeks after all required certification assessments have been submitted and evaluated.

10. Process for completing the Field Observation Tool (Incumbent Certification).

Case Manager Field Observation Tool:

The Field Program Specialist (FPS) assigned to the county/region or another supervisor outside of the line of supervision (not immediate supervisor) would be the reviewer for the

Field Observation Tool. The FPS or supervisor will observe the case manager in the field, complete the Field Observation Tool, and forward the assessment to the Education & Training Services Section for evaluation/scoring. The FPS or supervisor must complete the **Daily Behavioral Anchors, Court, and the section(s) of the Field Observation Tool relevant to the program area(s) for which the employee is seeking certification.** For example, if the employee works in Foster Care, the FPS or supervisor must complete the **Daily Behavioral Anchors, Court, and Foster Care sections** of the Field Observation Tool. You should write N/A or draw a line through the other sections. Employees will receive notification of their certification status within 4-6 weeks after all required certification assessments have been submitted and evaluated.

Supervisor Field Observation Tool:

The Field Program Specialist (FPS) assigned to the county/region would be the reviewer for the Field Observation Tool. The FPS will observe the supervisor in the field, complete the Field Observation Tool, and forward the assessment to the Education & Training Services Section for evaluation/scoring. The FPS must complete **Daily Behavioral Anchors, Court, and the section(s) of the Field Observation Tool relevant to the program area(s) for which the employee is seeking certification.** For example, if the employee works in Foster Care, the FPS must complete the **Daily Behavioral Anchors, Court, and Foster Care sections** of the Field Observation Tool. You should write N/A or draw a line through the other sections. Employees will receive notification of their certification status within 4-6 weeks after all required certification assessments (online test, case record, and field observation) have been evaluated.

11. Why is it important to complete (in its entirety) the top section of the Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool forms?

It is important to complete the entire top section of the Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool forms because this information is needed to evaluate/score the assessments. This information is very helpful in identifying the employee and supervisor, determining which program area(s) the employee is seeking to obtain certification, identifying who reviewed the assessment and the review date, determining the type of case reviewed, etc. The top section of the Case Record Review and Field Observation Tool must be completed in its entirety to be scored. If these assessments are not completed correctly, the reviewer will be notified and required to re-submit the assessments. It is important for the information to be printed legibly. Also, it is important that employees use the same name as in PeopleSoft. Errors in processing the assessments often occur when information is not printed clearly and accurately.