

CDA Renewal FAQ

Your **Child Development Associate (CDA)** credential is valid for **3 years**. To stay active, you must renew **before it expires**

When should I start getting ready to renew my CDA?

Start early so you're not rushing at the end.

The Council recommends preparing **well in advance**, and you can submit your renewal application **up to 6 months before** your expiration date.

When can I submit my renewal application?

You can submit your CDA renewal application **up to 6 months before** your credential expires, and the Council must **receive your application by the expiration date**.

My CDA has already expired. What should I do?

If your CDA credential expires, the Council states there are **no exceptions or extensions**, and **you will have to reapply to obtain a new credential**.

Tip: If you're not sure whether you're expired or still active, check your status in your Council account and follow the Council's current instructions.

What do I need to renew my CDA?

You must meet **all** renewal requirements. The Renewal Procedures Guide lists the key areas below:

1) Professional development (training)



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You need **one** of the following:

- **45 clock hours** of training, **or**
- **4.5 CEUs**, **or**
- **A 3-credit college course**

Important training rules:

- Training must be completed **after the issue date** of your most current CDA credential.
- Training can't be **older than 3 years** at the time you submit your application.
- Don't re-take the same courses you used for your original CDA or previous renewals.

ChildCareEd CDA Renewal Courses (45 hours):

- Infant-Toddler: <https://www.childcareed.com/courses-cda-infant-toddler-renewal.html>
- Family Child Care: <https://www.childcareed.com/courses-cda-family-child-care-renewal.html>
- Preschool: <https://www.childcareed.com/courses-cda-preschool-renewal.html>

2) Membership in a professional organization

You'll need documentation of current membership in a **national or local early childhood professional organization**.

What counts as a membership?

- **Individual membership:** your name is on it.
- **Center/program membership:** the center name is on it (it must clearly be a center membership, not just another staff person's card).

So is it your workplace?

Only **sometimes**:

- If your workplace **has a center membership** in an ECE professional organization *and* the documentation shows the **center name**, you can use that.
- But simply **working at a daycare/preschool** does **not** count as "membership."

What proof do you need?



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The Council says acceptable proof includes a **membership card, membership certificate, letter on letterhead, or receipt** showing the membership.

What does NOT count?

The Council notes that things like **PTA, teacher unions, magazine subscriptions**, and some **state registry memberships** don't meet this requirement.

3) Recent work with children + a recommendation

Renewal includes:

- **At least 80 hours** working with young children (in your setting) and
 - **A recommendation from an ECE Reviewer.**
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Can I renew in a different CDA setting (like switching from Preschool to Infant-Toddler)?

The Council says you can **only renew in the setting of your original credential**, and all renewal requirements must be met in that setting (even if you don't work in that setting anymore).

Do I still need CPR/First Aid for CDA renewal?

The Council's renewal updates state that **First Aid and CPR are no longer required at the time of renewal** (effective **August 1, 2025**). Programs and state licensing may still require it for your job, but it's not part of the Council's renewal requirement anymore.

What happens after I submit my CDA renewal application?

Many candidates are renewed after submitting a **completed** application and payment, but some are randomly selected for an **audit**.

If selected for audit:

- The Council reviews your submitted documentation.



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- If something needs fixing, you have **30 calendar days** to submit corrected documentation.
 - If you don't submit the correct documentation within 30 days, your application expires and the renewal fee is forfeited.
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Can I still renew using a paper application?

The Council's renewal page says the **final day paper applications were accepted was December 31, 2025** (so going forward, expect to renew online).

How to renew your CDA online (YourCouncil)

1) Get your documents ready first

The Council recommends you gather required documentation before you start the online application. The detailed list/forms are in the CDA Renewal Procedures Guide.

2) Access your YourCouncil account

If you don't know your login, the Council's "Accessing Your Account in YourCouncil (for Renewal Candidates)" steps are: go to cdacouncil.org → YourCouncil Login → click "Forgot your Password?" → enter the email they have on file → you'll receive an email from info@yourcouncil.org with your username and password.

3) Start a renewal application in the portal

Once logged in, the Renewal Guide says to:

- Select "CDA Renewal"
- Click "CREATE NEW CDA RENEWAL APPLICATION"

4) Enter the people the system needs (emails matter)

The online process will ask for:

- Your ECE Reviewer's email address (so they can submit the recommendation/verification through the system).



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And the guide explains that online renewal also sends a Training and Membership Verification request to your Verifier by email (with a link for them to complete it).

5) Upload required documentation

The Renewal Guide notes that in the online application you'll be asked to upload your:

- training documentation
- membership documentation
- experience verification documentation

6) Pay the renewal fee online and submit

The Council's Renew CDA page lists the online renewal fee (\$250) and says you can upload documents, pay electronically, and track your progress.

The Renewal Guide adds that you can pay online by credit card or voucher number (if you have one).

What's the easiest way to avoid problems with renewal?

- Mark your expiration date and start early (6 months ahead is allowed).
- Make sure your training is **recent** and **after your issue date**.
- Keep copies of certificates, membership proof, and work verification in one folder.
- Apply online so you can upload documents and track progress.

Two important reminders

- You can submit the renewal application **up to 6 months before** your credential expires.
- The Council says you must renew **before it expires** (so don't wait until the last minute)



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