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Criteria and Procedures for Substance Abuse Counselor Certification

Sec. 20-74o-1. Definitions

For the purpose of sections 20-74o-1 through 20-74o-4 inclusive the following definitions apply:

(a) "Board" means the Connecticut Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselor Certification Board.

(b) "Code of ethics" means standards of professional and personal conduct and competency for certified substance abuse counselors as established by the board.

(c) "Commission" means the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission.

(d) "Certified substance abuse counselor" means a person who, by virtue of special knowledge, training and experience, is uniquely able to inform, motivate, guide and assist alcoholics or drug dependent persons or both, and those persons affected by problems related to the abuse of alcohol or drugs or both, and has been certified by the commission.

(e) "Executive director" means the executive director of the Connecticut alcohol and drug abuse commission.

(f) "Registry" means the list of certified substance abuse counselors maintained by the commission.

(Effective November 27, 1992)

Sec. 20-74o-2. Certification process

A candidate who applies for certification as a substance abuse counselor may be certified in the area of alcoholism or drug abuse or both.

(a) **Eligibility.** A substance abuse counselor shall be eligible for certification by the commission:

(1) When the applicant demonstrates he has been certified by the board and such certification is in good standing at the time of the application for commission certification.

(2) The applicant provides evidence to the commission that the applicant has acquired the minimum number of hours of substance abuse counseling experience under clinical supervision as required in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision. Such experience shall be documented according to the area of certification and shall have been accrued within the twelve (12) years prior to application.

(A) Such experience shall be acquired under the clinical supervision of a senior staff member of a treatment facility who has experience and training in substance abuse counseling and whose duties include overseeing client care; and

(B) Such experience shall include a minimum number of hours providing counseling in alcoholism or drug abuse or both to substance abusers as follows:

(i) To be certified as an alcoholism substance abuse counselor, an applicant shall demonstrate that he has provided a minimum of 4,000 hours of alcoholism counseling to substance abusers;

(ii) To be certified as a drug abuse substance abuse counselor an applicant shall demonstrate that he has provided a minimum of 4,000 hours of drug abuse counseling to substance abusers;

(iii) To be certified as both an alcoholism and drug abuse substance abuse counselor, an applicant shall demonstrate that he has provided a minimum of 6,000 hours of counseling to substance abusers;

(iv) At least fifty percent of such counseling shall be acquired through paid employment. The other fifty percent may be acquired through paid employment,

internship/practicum experience, or a combination thereof. Every hour of internship/practicum experience shall be credited as if it were one hour of paid employment; and

(3) The applicant provides evidence to the commission that the applicant has completed the minimum amount of training for certification as a substance abuse counselor.

(A) Such training shall be on a specific topic that relates to the counselor's responsibilities. The topics may include but are not limited to client intake, evaluation, orientation and motivation, treatment planning, consultation and referrals, alcoholism and drug abuse education, individual and group counseling, working with family and others, reports and record keeping, client follow-up and aftercare, crisis intervention and outreach.

(B) Such training may be in the form of seminars, conferences, workshops and academic courses which shall be a minimum duration of five hours each.

(C) Such training shall include a minimum of 240 hours of training about alcoholism and drug abuse for certification in the single area of alcoholism or drug abuse or shall include a minimum of 360 hours of training about alcoholism and drug abuse for certification in the dual areas of alcoholism and drug abuse.

(i) Certification in the area of alcoholism shall include 120 hours of training about alcoholism.

(ii) Certification in the area of drug abuse shall include 120 hours of training about drug abuse.

(iii) Certification in the area of both alcoholism and drug abuse shall include 120 hours of training about drug abuse and 120 hours of training about alcoholism.

(D) Such training shall be documented to indicate that the applicant successfully completed the training. The documentation shall include the date, location, and subject matter of the training. The documentation may take the form of a grade report, transcript, certificate of completion, or memorandum from the instructor.

(b) Application.

(1) A substance abuse counselor who has been certified by the board shall make application for commission certification on a form designated by the commission.

(2) The applicant shall supply, on a form designated by the commission, verification to the commission that the board is in possession of all information as is required in subsection (a) of this section.

(3) The commission shall review all applications and shall verify that the applicant is certified by the board.

(4) The commission shall certify, for a period of two years from the date of issue, all applicants who meet its requirements as specified in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Recertification.

(1) A certified substance abuse counselor in good standing may be recertified by the commission an indefinite number of times so long as he remains in good standing and meets the requirements for recertification as stated in subdivisions (2) and (3) of this subsection.

(2) A substance abuse counselor who is certified by the commission shall apply for recertification on a form designated by the commission not later than thirty (30) days after the expiration date of his current certification. Failure of a certified counselor to apply for recertification shall cause the commission certification to become invalid. The name of such lapsed counselor shall be removed from the registry.

(3) An applicant for recertification shall provide evidence to the commission that he has been recertified by the board and has completed sixty (60) hours of training within the previous two (2) year period.

(A) Such training shall be on topics that relate to the counselor's responsibilities. Topics may include but are not limited to client intake, evaluation, orientation and motivation, treatment planning, consultation and referrals, alcoholism and drug abuse education, individual and group counseling, working with family and others, reports and record keeping, client follow-up and aftercare, and crisis intervention and outreach.

(B) Thirty (30) hours of such training must be alcohol/drug specific.

(C) Forty (40) hours of such training must be academic courses which may include workshops, seminars, or inservice, college or university work.

(D) A maximum of ten (10) hours of training may be in the form of individualized self-paced instruction which may include viewing mental health films, observing clinical work, attending self-growth group sessions, reviewing community treatment resources and professional publications, and teaching or consulting on substance abuse or mental health related subjects or professionals or clients.

(4) Any certification which becomes invalid pursuant to this subsection may be reinstated by the commission if application for reinstatement is made not later than six (6) years after the expiration date and the applicant provides evidence to the commission that he has been recertified by the board.

(Effective November 27, 1992)

Sec. 20-74o-3. Registry of certified substance abuse counselors

(a) The commission shall maintain a current registry of all certified substance abuse counselors.

(b) The entry for each certified substance abuse counselor shall include the following information:

- (1) name;
- (2) home or business address;
- (3) home or business telephone number;
- (4) employer's name or name of usual place of business; and
- (5) the expiration date of the certification or recertification.

(c) Each certified substance abuse counselor shall promptly notify the commission of any change in the information required by subsection (b) of this section.

(Effective November 27, 1992)

Sec. 20-74o-4. Hearing panel, disciplinary action

(a) **Petition.** Any person may file a petition with the commission pursuant to the regulations of Connecticut state agencies, sections 17a-636-11 through 17a-636-62 if they have cause to believe that a certified substance abuse counselor has violated any statutes, regulations or the board's code of ethics as set forth in the board's certification manual.

(b) **Investigation.** The commission may direct the executive director to conduct any investigation that it deems necessary.

(1) If, after investigation of the petition, the executive director finds there is not sufficient evidence to establish the alleged violation, he shall notify the commission, petitioner and respondent and no further action shall be taken.

(2) If, after investigation of the petition, the executive director determines there is evidence to substantiate the alleged violation, he shall submit a written report to

the commission which includes a summary of the evidence, specific statutes, regulations or codes of ethics which are alleged to have been violated, and his recommendations.

(c) **Panel.** The commission shall designate a hearing panel consisting of three members of the commission for the purpose of conducting any hearing regarding a complaint against a certified substance abuse counselor and reporting its recommendations to the commission.

(d) **Notice of hearing.** The executive director shall issue notice of the hearing. Such notice shall comply with the provisions of section 4-177 of the Connecticut general statutes and sections 17a-636-11 through 17a-636-62 of the regulations of Connecticut state agencies.

(e) **Hearing.** All parties shall be afforded the opportunity to respond and present oral and written evidence on the issues involved in the complaint.

(f) **Report.** The panel shall make a written report to the commission with a copy to the respondents and any other party deemed by the panel to be entitled to such copy. Such report shall include the recommendations of the panel, a brief statement of findings of fact and reasons supporting the recommendations.

(g) **Decision.** The commission shall issue its decision on the complaint which shall be binding on all parties.

(h) **Registry.** The counselor's name shall be removed from the registry if the certification is revoked by the commission. If the counselor is suspended by the commission, notice of the suspension shall be recorded in the registry during the time the suspension is in force.

(Effective November 27, 1992)