**Association of Child Life Professionals
Child Life Certification Commission
Operational Policy and Procedure**

SUBJECT: 1.0 ESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY

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POLICY

All applicants for the Child Life Professional Certification Exam are required to establish eligibility prior to being seated for the exam.

Eligibility will not be established if:

- Applicant does not meet the eligibility criteria or fails to supply appropriate verification of same.

- There is evidence of tampering with documentation (these cases will be referred to the Ethics Committee).

Eligibility Requirements

I.   General

1. Candidates are not permitted to sit for the Child Life Professional Certification Exam if they do not meet all eligibility requirements by the registration deadline.

2. In cases where candidates have established eligibility but must re-take or reschedule the exam date, the candidate must meet the current eligibility requirements for that exam. This may require that the candidate re-establish eligibility.

3. All submitted materials become the property of CLCC.

4. In addition to meeting the following eligibility requirements, candidates are required to:

    *   pay all required fees

    *   review and sign the Statements of Understanding

    *   answer background questions regarding criminal actions, professional disciplinary proceedings, and substance abuse

5. Applications of candidates who answer affirmatively to any of the background questions are subject to review by the Ethics Committee.

II.   Academic

There are 2 options for fulfilling the academic components of eligibility as follows:

1. *Option 1* is the successful completion of a degree from an ACLP-Endorsed Academic Program

    *   Applicants must have completed and documented the degree by the examination registration deadline.

    *   All applicants for the certification exam are required to complete the Eligibility Assessment process. Course Work Review results are not an acceptable substitute.

    *   Applicants pay a one-time* fee to initiate an Eligibility Assessment and submit information and materials (including official transcripts and other verification documents) as the requirements for establishing exam eligibility are completed. *When the eligibility requirements change, a second payment of this fee will be required as a new assessment must be opened.

2. *Option 2* is the successful completion of a bachelor's degree AND 10 college/university courses as follows: 1) Child life course taught by a CCLS 2) A minimum of 2 child development courses that cover ages birth -18 3) Family systems course 4) Play course 5) Loss/bereavement or death/dying course 6) Research course 7) 3 additional courses in related content areas (additional information about the required curriculum follows).

    *   Degree can be in any field of study.

- Applicants must have completed and documented the degree and the required courses by the examination registration deadline.

- For each of the 10 required courses, it is recommended that students take a 3-credit course or the equivalent to have an appropriate depth of instruction.

- A minimum of one full course must be completed for each of the required areas of study. (A minimum of two courses are required for the child development requirement.)

- For a course to count, the required content (see below) must be the primary focus.

- All points within the Required Content section of each course must be covered within the course.

- No in-progress courses will be accepted

- Classes completed via distance learning (online) will be accepted if reflected on an original official college/university transcript with a passing grade

- Documentation presented in a foreign language must be translated to English, at the applicant's expense, by a translation agency with a notarized signature attesting to the accuracy of the translated content

- CLCC Chairpersons will be consulted in cases where course content is questionable

- Each course may satisfy only one of the requirements; none can be applied to meet two or more of these required courses. For example, a child life course that addresses play may not be used to fulfill both the child life course and the play course requirements. It may be used to meet the child life course OR the play course requirement, but not both.

- Courses that have been pre-approved by ACLP will be accepted.

- All applicants for the certification exam are required to complete the Eligibility Assessment process. Course Work Review results are not an acceptable substitute.

- Applicants pay a one-time* fee to initiate an Eligibility Assessment and submit information and materials (including official transcripts and other verification documents) as the requirements for establishing exam eligibility are completed. *When the eligibility requirements change, a second payment of this fee will be required as a new assessment must be opened.

1) Child life course taught by a Certified Child Life Specialist details:

- The required child life course(s) must have a focus on children in the healthcare environment and must be taught by a CCLS. ALL of the following applied areas of study

must be included in the course(s):

1) Official Documents of the Association for Child Life Professionals
2) Scope of Practice
3) Family-Centered Care
4) Impact of illness, injury and health care on patients/families
5) Play
6) Preparation

- The six required areas of study in the child life course taught by a Certified Child Life Specialist may be spread across a sequence of courses. In such a case, applicants must successfully complete all courses in the sequence to fulfill the CCLS course eligibility requirement.

- Instructor Requirements:

  o Hold/maintain the CCLS credential throughout the period of instruction

  o A minimum of 4,000 hours of paid child life clinical experience OR a minimum of two years of experience teaching child life subject matter

    ▪ CCLS must be able to demonstrate that the two years of teaching experience was completed prior to 2022.

  o Beginning in 2022, those without prior teaching experiences who wish to initiate a child life course will only be considered qualified if they have a minimum of 4,000 hours of paid child life clinical experience

  o Maintains knowledge of the Association of Child Life Professionals Code of Ethical Responsibility and the Official Documents of the Association of Child Life Professionals

  o Pursue training relevant to adult learning styles and evidence-based teaching methodology

2) Child Development Courses Details:

- Required Content: Typical child growth and development including theoretical content for children and adolescents (birth - 18 years old)

- Required Number of Courses: At least two courses that focus curriculum on typical growth and development (not atypical) and cumulatively cover child development from birth to 18 years. Examples:

  o One course on children Birth – 8 (early childhood) -AND- One course on children 9-18 (middle childhood and adolescence)

- One course on early childhood (birth-8 years), -AND- One course on middle childhood (9-12 years), -AND- One course on adolescent (13-18 years).
- One course on development birth – 18 -AND- One course on infant, school age, or adolescent development
- Two courses on development birth – 18 (Not Recommended)

- A minimum of 3 credit hours or unit equivalency for each course is recommended.

- More than 2 courses may be needed to fulfill this requirement. If any portion of this age span is not covered, additional courses must be taken.

- Course titles must contain the words "child" (infant, toddler, middle, latent, adolescent) and "development" and indicate the age range covered by the course. Applicants submitting courses that do not follow this scheme may be required to submit additional information such as course syllabi.

- Courses covering the lifespan of development are not accepted due to the limited amount of time and content allocated for children birth–18 years old.

- Courses focusing on adults or seniors are not accepted.

3) Family Systems course details:

- Required Content: Content must focus on a systems approach to understanding families (e.g. an ecological approach or Family Systems Theory)

- Required Number of Courses: One course is required

- A minimum of 3 credit hours or unit equivalency is recommended

- Recommended Components:

  - Historical and contemporary theories related to family structure and functions
  - Family dynamics including broader societal perspectives of diversity and cultural variance
  - Family relationships and the dynamics of family life
  - Adaptations in family structure and interaction patterns during times of transition
  - Adult-child interactions and family roles
  - Exploration of current research and theory as it applies to family systems

4) Play course details:

- Required Content: This course must focus on the therapeutic aspects and/or learning objectives of play in infants, children, youth, and young adults.

- Required Number of Courses: One course is required

- A minimum of 3 credit hours or unit equivalency is recommended

- Recommended Components:

  - Classical and contemporary theories on play
  - Play as an essential element for children's growth, development, and learning
  - Influence of play environments on children's play

- Acceptable Curricula:

  - Observing, assessing, and using play to make judgments about children's learning
  - Play as the primary vehicle and indicator of physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of children
  - Play principles and values
  - Structuring therapeutic play sessions
  - Creativity and play
  - Guidance of play
  - Play, curriculum and program development
  - Art, music, and play for early childhood education*
  - Concepts of leisure, play and recreation*

    *Courses that cover all stages of childhood (birth to 18) and non-recreational therapy courses are preferred.

- Coursework NOT Accepted: Courses from the college/university department of physical education are NOT accepted.

5) Loss/bereavement of death/dying course details:

- Required Content: Foundations of loss, bereavement, and/or death/dying

- Required Number of Courses: One course is required

- A minimum of 3 credit hours or unit equivalency is recommended

- Recommended Components:

  - Historical, current, cultural, spiritual, and religious perspectives
  - Topics including ambiguous loss, transitions, palliative care, self-awareness & self-care
  - Inclusion of content focused on impacts to children and families is recommended

- Courses on aging are not accepted

6) Research course details:

- Required Content: Basic research methods, statistics, and outcomes that apply to clinical practice and program review.

- Required Number of Courses: One course is required

- A minimum of 3 credit hours or unit equivalency is recommended

- Recommended Components:

  o Foundational research literacy and research ethics
  o Introductory approaches to research – quantitative, qualitative, action research, and analysis
  o Introduction to knowledge translation and dissemination of research outcomes impacting clinical practice program review
  o Introduction to the integral role of research in evidenced-based practice.
  o Research processes of data collection, evaluation, literature review, knowledge translation

- Courses with "research" in the title will be accepted.

7) Additional coursework details:

- Required Content: Child life or a closely related subject

- Required Number of Courses: Three courses are required

- A minimum of 3 credit hours or unit equivalency per course is recommended

- Recommended Courses: It is highly recommended that applicants complete these courses in the following content areas:

  o Ethics
  o Human Anatomy and Physiology
  o Medical Terminology

- Additional Coursework Options: Applicants who do not complete additional course work in the areas listed above will be required to take three courses from one or more of the following college/university departments:

- o Child Life
- o Child Development
- o Counseling
- o Expressive Therapies (only courses that cover the therapeutic applications of play, music, dance, and art will be accepted; fine arts courses are NOT accepted)
- o Family Development
- o Family Dynamics
- o Human Development
- o Psychology
- o Therapeutic Recreation

- Coursework Options Requiring a Syllabus: Courses from the following areas of study or departments will be accepted only if the course content (as demonstrated by the course syllabus) is closely related to child life.

  - o Sociology
  - o Social Work
  - o Nursing
  - o Early Childhood Education
  - o Special Education
  - o Human Services
  - o Marriage and Family Therapy
  - o Allied Health
  - o Family Studies

- Coursework NOT Accepted: Courses in Recreation Administration

III. *Clinical Experience*

1. Candidates must have completed a minimum of 600 hours of child life clinical internship supervised by a CCLS.

2. Practicum, volunteer, and paid work hours are not accepted.

3. An internship may be paid but must be a structured learning experience as opposed to paid work experience.

4. A minimum of 600 hours must be completed and documented by the registration deadline for the examination administration for which the applicant is applying. If the term of an internship is longer than the required 600 hours, the entire internship program does not have to be complete by the exam registration deadline.

5. The experience must be documented on a Clinical Experience Verification Form from each clinical experience site, signed by the supervising CCLS(s). This form may be completed through an online verification process.

6. Supervised clinical experience be completed in an environment in which the applicant has direct, daily contact with a CCLS to allow for adequate supervision. Completing a placement in such an environment will allow for appropriate observation, modeling and demonstration of entry-level competence.

7. It is recommended that the intern and supervisor work 80% of the same hours.

8. Rare, special circumstances may be approved to diverge from the above requirements by submitting an Application for the Approval of Internship with Remote Supervision under Extenuating Circumstances.

PROCEDURE

Eligibility Assessment

Prior to being seated for the exam, all applicants must complete an Eligibility Assessment which includes review of the following:

- Degree information
- Coursework information
- Internship information

To support the information provided, the following documentation must also be submitted:

1. *Bachelor's Degree Documentation Required:*

- An original official* transcript from the college/university conferring the degree, which shows the type of degree granted and the date conferred

- A higher degree original official* transcript showing enrolled or completed courses is also accepted

- "Official" is defined by each college/university. CLCC does not accept unofficial transcripts that have been printed by the applicant from the university website.

- Faxed and photocopied transcripts are not accepted.

- Emailed or electronic transcripts are only accepted if sent directly by the academic institution and are considered official by the school.

2. *Course Work Documentation Required:*

- Applicants must provide a list of courses to be reviewed indicating which courses are intended to satisfy which requirement. Whole transcripts will not be reviewed.

- For the Child Life Course Taught by a CCLS:

  - Applicants must request verification through the Eligibility Assessment online process or provide the Child Life Course Verification Form signed by the CCLS instructor showing that all six required topics of study were covered **AND** an official* transcript from each college or university where the course work were completed.

  - If all six required topics are not covered in one class, multiple copies of the form for additional classes are accepted.

- All required courses including the child life course must appear on an official* transcript with a passing grade.
- "Official" is defined by each college/university. CLCC does not accept unofficial transcripts that have been printed by the applicant from the university website.

- Transferred courses from another school must indicate that the courses were completed successfully on the transcript or be documented by another official* transcript from the original college/university.

- Faxed and photocopied transcripts are not accepted.

- Emailed or electronic transcripts are only accepted if sent directly by the academic institution and are considered official by the school.

- Applicants are required to submit university-generated course descriptions when applying for an Eligibility Assessment.

- Applicants must be prepared to provide university-generated syllabi if requested.

3. *Clinical Experience Documentation Required:*

- Applicants must request verification of their clinical experience through the Eligibility Assessment online process or provide the Clinical Experience Verification Form signed by the CCLS supervisor(s) verifying that a minimum of 600 hours of child life clinical training was successfully completed and the applicant demonstrated minimal/entry-level competence.

- If hours were earned at multiple sites, verification of the hours must be obtained from each site.

- If any of these materials bear a different name, name change verification must also be submitted.

- If these materials are in a language other than English, they must be translated into English, at the applicant's expense, by a professional translation agent with a notarized signature or stamp attesting to the accuracy of the contents.