

INDIGENOUS CERTIFICATION BOARD OF CANADA

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SUMMARY OF STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS CERTIFIED INDIGENOUS PEER SUPPORT WORKER (CIPSW)

What Makes CIPSW Unique

The Certified Indigenous Peer Support Worker credential is the only certification in Canada that places Indigenous cultural knowledge, lived experience in recovery, and community-based healing at the centre of peer support practice. Unlike other certifying boards, ICBOC recognizes that cultural competency is not supplementary — it is foundational. This certification honours the wisdom of Indigenous traditions and the strength of those who have walked the healing journey.

Peer support skills may be gained through a variety of training providers. What makes the CIPSW distinct is the expectation that these skills are practiced through an Indigenous lens — grounded in cultural identity, traditional healing wisdom, and a deep commitment to the communities we serve.

		Hours												
Education	Completion of Secondary school or other studies at higher level that include courses in the required education/training for this certification. Primary educational pathway for this certification: Accredited Peer Support Worker Program — Recovery Works (irecoveryworks.ca)	40 hrs												
Experience	Five hundred hours (6 months) of lived experience in recovery from mental health and/or substance use conditions AND work experience or practice providing peer support services to individuals affected by addictions or mental health issues, accumulated through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid work experience in the current position and in remunerated previous occupations providing peer support services • Experience acquired by means of a practicum/internship/placement, undertaken as part of a program of studies • Proven experience as a volunteer providing peer support services (to a maximum of 100 hours) <p>This certification requires applicants to self-identify as persons living in recovery and be willing to publicly identify as such for the purpose of supporting others.</p>	500												
Education or Training <i>70 hours minimum</i>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Cultural Knowledge and Skills — foundational requirement</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Hours</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Introduction to Peer Support</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mastering Communication Skills</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Understanding Recovery and Stages of Change</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Concurrent Disorders</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boundaries and Ethics</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Cultural Knowledge and Skills — foundational requirement	Hours	Introduction to Peer Support	5	Mastering Communication Skills	8	Understanding Recovery and Stages of Change	8	Concurrent Disorders	12	Boundaries and Ethics	7	70 hrs
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Supervisor's Evaluation <i>Minimum Score</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Peer Support • Communication Skills • Understanding Recovery and Stages of Change • Concurrent Disorders • Knowledge and Skills in Support of Professional Practice • Boundaries and Ethics • Cultural Competencies • Professional Integrity 	70%												
Practicum	Some hours of training in peer support functions can be counted (must submit Practicum Report)													
Cultural Knowledge and Skills		30 hrs												

All applicants must complete the following three tasks OR demonstrate equivalent knowledge through the Community-Based Learning pathway.	
Task 1: Reflective Video Summary <i>1-page reflective summary</i>	5
<p>Watch the following three videos and submit a 1-page summary including a description of each, personal reflections, dates viewed, and your full name.</p> <p>1) Jordan's Principle — cwrp.ca/publications/jordans-principle-video</p> <p>2) Alanis Obomsawin — "Jordan River Anderson, The Messenger" — onf.ca/film/jordan-river-anderson-le-messenger/</p> <p>3) The Sixties Scoop — "Birth of a Family" (NFB) — nfb.ca/film/birth_of_a_family/</p>	
Task 2: Thunderbird Partnership Foundation Training <i>Certificate of completion</i>	16.25
<p>Complete a minimum 16.25 hours (2.5-day) culturally relevant, trauma-informed training through the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation. Certificate must show your name, training title, and date.</p> <p>Training calendar: thunderbirdpf.org/training-calendar/</p>	
Task 3: "Indigenous Canada" Online Course — University of Alberta / Coursera <i>Certificate of completion</i>	8.75
<p>Complete all 12 modules covering Indigenous perspectives on treaties, colonization, cultural practices, and intergenerational trauma. Certificate must show your full name and completion date.</p> <p>Register here: coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada</p>	
Additional Recovery and Wellness Topics (not exhaustive)	Recommended
<p>Grief work • FASD • Intergenerational trauma • Residential School trauma • Indigenous & Western approaches • Traditional healing • HIV/AIDS • STDs • Trauma-informed care • Neurological aspects of addictions • Nutrition & substance use • Diabetes • Addiction-related health issues • Trauma work • Suicide • Relapse prevention • Specific drugs/substances • Co-occurring disorders • Cultural healing practices • Resilience • Concurrent disorders • Healthy lifestyle/life coaching • Healthy parenting • 2SLGBTQ+ issues • Alternative healing practices</p>	
NOTE ON EDUCATION / TRAINING	
<p>Hours may be acquired through university/college programs, workshops, seminars, webinars, in-house training, or community-based and experiential learning. All hours must be supported by proof of attendance: transcripts, certificates, or signed declarations on employer letterhead including provider name, training title, hours, dates, and contact information.</p>	