



## Certified Advanced Grief Counseling Specialist (CAGCS) Certification Standards

### 1.0 Professional Standards

1.1 To be eligible for certification, the applicant must have earned a minimum of a master's degree in their profession AND hold a state or national license as listed below, with all training hours and supervision requirements completed to be licensed for independent practice in the state they are licensed in (or equivalent if practicing outside of the United States):

- Psychologist (LP or LCP)
- Counselor
  - LCMHC
  - LCP
  - LCPC
  - LMHC
  - LPC
  - LPCC
  - LPCMH
- Social Worker
  - LCSW
  - LCSW-C
  - LICSW
  - LISW
- LISW-CP
- LMSW if licensed in Michigan or Nebraska
- LMSW-ACP
- LSCSW
- Marriage and Family Therapist
  - LCMFT
  - LIMFT
  - LMFT
- Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (NP)
- Psychiatrist (MD)
- Psychoanalyst (LP)
- Pastoral Counselor

Canadian Applicants: Licensed professionals who have met the licensure requirements for Provincial and Territorial Regulatory Bodies are welcome to apply. If you are unsure whether your professional background meets the standards for certification, please email us a copy of your educational background and CV to [info@evergreencertifications.com](mailto:info@evergreencertifications.com)

International Applicants: Please check for a link to standards specific to your country of practice. If no link is available, please email us a copy of your educational background and CV to [info@evergreencertifications.com](mailto:info@evergreencertifications.com)

### 2.0 Educational Standards

2.1 The candidate must meet the following education criteria (total minimum of 18 CE hours):

- Complete a minimum of 6 clock hours of continuing education in these areas (*current certification as a Certified Grief Counseling Specialist meets this requirement*):
  - Types of grief and their implications for treatment/intervention
  - Intake assessment of grieving clients, including assessment for depression and suicide
  - Interventions and strategies for grief therapy or counseling
  - Differentiate between grief counseling vs. grief therapy
  - The process of death, dying and mourning
  - Regret, forgiveness, and reconciliation
  - Special considerations for grief and loss across all developmental and life stages
  - Multicultural and spirituality considerations

- Boundaries of professional competence
- Ethical considerations, including working with the terminally ill, minors, families and end-of-life decisions
- Self-care for the grief professional
- Complete a minimum of 12 clock hours of continuing education in the following areas:
  - Interventions for death vs. non-death losses
  - Assessment and treatment of Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder
    - Co-occurring disorders and differential diagnosis
  - Grief related to sudden death, including suicide loss or violent death
    - Assess for suicidal ideation & substance use as a coping mechanism
    - Interventions and strategies for coping with shame & stigma
    - Foster post-traumatic growth after suicide loss
    - Risk assessment for suicidal ideation & violence
  - Interventions and strategies for traumatic and/or complicated grief, including:
    - Challenges for the grieving process
    - Vicarious trauma
    - Generational trauma
  - Post-traumatic growth
  - Resilience
  - Grief and loss groups
  - Considerations for impact of loss on the family system
  - Ethical principles

2.2 Suitable education sources are approved continuing education as documented by certificates of completion from the accredited training organization.

Evergreen Certifications will accept courses that have been completed within 3 years of initial application for certification.

### **3.0 Clinical Practice Requirements**

The applicant must attest that, over the course of their career, he/she has conducted a minimum of 200 therapy hours with grief clients. Additionally, the applicant must submit one letter of recommendation from a licensed professional peer who is familiar with and can attest to the applicant's clinical grief counseling work.

### **4.0 Certification Application Process**

1. Submit the following documents:
  - a. A copy of the applicant's professional license
  - b. Copies of completion of training as outline in the Educational Standards
  - c. A signed application form with attestation that the candidate has met all the requirements as detailed herein
  - d. One letter of recommendation from a peer who can attest to the applicant's grief work
2. Payment of certification application fee

Evergreen Certifications will certify candidates who meet the above requirements.

*Please note: Certification does not imply endorsement of clinical competency. As a licensed professional, you are responsible for reviewing the scope of practice, including activities that are defined in law as beyond the boundaries of practice in accordance with and in compliance with your profession's standards.*

## **5.0 Renewal of Certification**

To maintain certification, a renewal is required. After your initial 2-year certification, you have the option to renew for 2 years. The steps to apply for a 2-year renewal are as follows:

1. Submit a copy of your professional licensure as well as completion certificate(s) for twelve (12) clock hours of grief-focused continuing education
2. Payment of re-certification application fee

Renewal training hours need to have been taken in the time since you were certified or last renewed. Renewals are calculated from the date that your certification was issued.

*If you allow your certification to lapse for more than 3 years, you are no longer eligible to renew your certification and instead can reapply for certification.*