



Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SPECIALIST

CERTIFICATION

APPLICATION **GUIDE**

November 2022

**For the most up-to-date information on DCADV
Domestic Violence Certification, visit
www.dcadv.org/DVS.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV) would like to thank the members of the Certification Committee and Certification Review Panel for their tremendous time and contributions in supporting and sustaining the certification process for the Delaware Domestic Violence Specialist.

The Coalition would also like to thank the New Jersey Coalition for Battered Women (now the New Jersey Coalition to End Domestic Violence) and the New Jersey Association of Domestic Violence Professionals for providing an excellent certification model that helped guide our efforts. DCADV borrowed extensively from New Jersey in creating the first Delaware Domestic Violence Specialist Certification in 2001.

DCADV would also like to thank the Department of Women and Gender Studies and the Center for the Prevention and Study of Gender-Based Violence at the University of Delaware for their unyielding commitment to help build Delaware's future workforce of domestic violence advocates. In 2010, the Department launched the Domestic Violence Prevention and Services (DVPS) Concentration and Minor thanks to initial funding from Verizon Delaware.

The DVPS program was developed in partnership with DCADV and is aligned with the training and field experience requirements for DCADV's DVS Certification. Additionally, DCADV teaches a course on domestic violence prevention, policy, and advocacy as part of the course requirements that features guest presentations from practitioners across the state. The program also combines coursework with practical experience by partnering with local domestic violence intervention and prevention programs to offer concentration students a ten-week summer practicum. The only one of its kind available to undergraduates in the United States, the DVPS program prepares students for a range of careers focused on domestic violence advocacy and prevention.

Last but not least, we would also like to thank all of the survivors, advocates, service providers, and preventionists who work each day to make the world a safer place for victims of domestic violence and their children, and strive to promote community norms and conditions where healthy, respectful relationships thrive.

INTRODUCTION

The DCADV Domestic Violence Specialist (DVS) Certification was developed to both recognize and enhance the skills of advocates and service providers working in the field of domestic violence intervention and prevention in Delaware. The certification process will help to ensure that standards of training and service are consistently high for those providing individual advocacy, as well as those engaged in prevention and systems advocacy.

DCADV's Domestic Violence Specialist Certification is a **voluntary certification**. Some states have requirements for people who are working (paid or unpaid) in domestic violence prevention and services. Currently, Delaware does not have those requirements. Each domestic violence program, agency, or organization has its own training/professional development requirements for their staff, volunteers, and interns.

The types of Domestic Violence Specialist Certification include:

Direct Service/Systems Advocacy: This certification track recognizes the dedication to quality service provision, as well as a commitment to improving Delaware's systems for victims/survivors of domestic/intimate partner violence.

Prevention: This certification track recognizes the valuable work done by those working to prevent and eliminate domestic/intimate partner violence by addressing the root causes of domestic/intimate partner violence at the individual, relationship, community, and/or societal levels through primary prevention efforts.

Dual Certification: We recognize that intervention and prevention work do not exist in silos. For those whose work experience has incorporated direct service, systems advocacy, and prevention, Dual Certification may apply.

The Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence is an equal opportunity agency. DCADV does not discriminate based on race, creed, color, gender, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic origin, disability, age, genetic information, sexual orientation, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and/or stalking, family responsibility, veteran status, economic condition, or any other category protected by state and/or federal civil rights laws.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 Philosophical Principles

03 Application Requirements

06 Professional Code of Ethics

08 Criminal History & Background Check

10 Service Experience

15 Training & Education

23 Mentoring

26 Evaluations

28 Application Submission & Review

31 Recertification

PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES

DCADV's Domestic Violence Specialist Certification Program is guided by the following values and philosophical principles:

Accountability

Effective advocacy, services and prevention programming must address the imbalance between those of unequal power, and must recognize that responsibility for violent behavior ultimately lies with the abuser and the oppressor. Accountability processes should prioritize survivor safety, self-determination, and empowerment, while simultaneously working to transform abusers/oppressors. As domestic violence is not just a personal problem, accountability processes should also focus on transforming organizations, communities, and systems from those perpetrating, tolerating or condoning oppression, abuse and violence, to those upholding equity and respect.

Anti-Oppression

Domestic violence, a pattern of power and control used by one partner over the other in an intimate relationship, stems from a larger context of inequality that is rooted in oppression. Oppression involves the systematic use of power to marginalize, exploit, silence, discriminate against, invalidate, deny, dismiss, and/or not recognize the complete humanness of members of a disadvantaged group. To respond to and prevent domestic violence, we must work to acknowledge, address and dismantle the oppressive systems that sustain it, including the reinforcement of these systems of oppression by various institutions.

Health Equity

Domestic violence, as a community or societal health issue, is preventable and avoidable. Domestic violence advocates, service providers and prevention programs best serve the community by working toward health equity, including valuing all people equally and helping optimize the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, learn, play, pray and age so that everyone has a fair chance to lead a healthy life free from violence and abuse. To achieve health equity, we must eliminate health inequities (differences in health that are preventable, unfair, and unjust) and health disparities (differences in health outcomes among groups of people). Understanding and approaching domestic violence as a health disparity that falls disproportionately on marginalized groups strengthens our collective ability to achieve health equity for all.

Inclusivity

Domestic violence advocates, service providers and prevention programs should engage and hold themselves accountable to victims/survivors and the communities they serve. Services and programming should be accessible to and responsive to diverse groups, regardless of social identities or abilities. Planning, implementation, and evaluation of services and programs should prioritize the voices of victims/survivors and those most impacted by violence and other forms of oppression.

Intersectionality

Domestic violence advocates, service providers and prevention programs best serve the community by focusing on the unique and distinct experiences of every victim/survivor or community member. Individuals hold a number of intersecting identities and roles including ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, etc. These intersections of multiple forms of oppression and privilege result in some individuals being more or less vulnerable to domestic violence and its impact.

Prevention

Preventing domestic violence requires broad-based and comprehensive strategies that focus on stopping the violence in the first place. Strategies to prevent first-time victimization that focus on risk reduction and avoidance put the responsibility on the victim; these strategies are less sustainable and limited in reach. Communities are best served by primary prevention strategies designed to prevent perpetration and address the root causes of violence to impact the systems, attitudes, and norms that allow domestic violence to persist.

Trauma-Informed Approach

Trauma, including but not limited to domestic and sexual violence, adverse childhood experiences, and chronic adversity, is pervasive. Therefore, domestic violence advocates, service providers and prevention programs best serve the community by employing a trauma-informed approach that realizes the prevalence of trauma; recognizes how trauma affects all individuals and communities involved with the program, organization, or system, including its own workforce; and responds by putting this knowledge into practice. Effective advocacy, services and prevention programming support individual healing, wellness and resiliency, along with community healing from the trauma of interpersonal, structural, historical, and institutional violence.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

DCADV will award certification to those advocates, service providers, and preventionists who meet the requirements as defined herein. This guide outlines in detail the requirements for Initial Certification as a Domestic Violence Specialist in one of three categories:

Direct Service/Systems Advocacy | Prevention | Dual Certification

In summary, the requirements are:

- 1 No history of violent behavior for five years, as demonstrated through a Criminal Background Check
- 2 Abide by the DCADV Domestic Violence Specialist Professional Code of Ethics
- 3 Complete 2,000 hours of service in their area of practice (direct services/systems advocacy and/or prevention).
- 4 Complete 70 clock hours (110 clock hours for Dual Certification) of Training and Education with documentation.
- 5 Complete 12 hours of mentoring sessions with a DCADV Certified Domestic Violence Specialist.
- 6 Ensure that three evaluations are submitted on the applicant's behalf; including one from a supervisor, a colleague, and a local community agency, as well as a self-evaluation to be completed by the applicant.

Please note: The Certification Review Panel may, at its discretion, require an interview and/or additional references.

STARTING THE APPLICATION



Application Guidance

All applicants must complete pages 1- 2 of the Initial Application, which included General Information, Employment Information, Correspondence Preferences, Education, and Consent for Release of Information.

General Information and Employment Information

Please complete this section with your contact information. If your contact information changes once you've submitted your application, please notify DCADV at training@dcadv.org as soon as possible.

? Why do you ask for **previously used names**?

We recognize that elements of our identities may change as we go through life. This can include name changes. We ask for any names that you've previously used that may appear on your application materials, including criminal history/background check, training documentation, etc.

Correspondence Preferences

DCADV will need to communicate with applicants and Certified Specialists. We want to ensure that we're reaching you in the manner that you prefer. Please indicate the best way to contact you via mail, phone, and email. It is the applicant/Certified Specialist's responsibility to keep this contact up-to-date with DCADV.



Mail: DCADV will mail your approval letter and certificate via USPS. Mailings will list DCADV as the return address.



Phone: We may need to contact you with questions about your application materials during business hours.



Email: We primarily use email to connect with applicants for certification reminders, training opportunities, and DVS program updates.

Education

DCADV Certified Domestic Violence Specialists are leaders in the field with unique skill sets who come from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. Please provide information about any higher education, degrees earned, or professional certifications that you've received.

This section does not include individual professional development opportunities; there will be space to enter those in the Training/Education section of the application.

Consent for Release of Information

All of the information you provide in the application (including the application itself and supplemental documents) will be used to make a decision about your certification status. This information shall remain confidential.

Your application materials will be accessed by DCADV staff whose work supports the DVS Certification Program, as well as the Certification Review Panel. Names and agencies/organizations of newly certified/recertified DV Specialists are shared with the DCADV Board of Directors.

If you have questions or concerns about how your information is used or stored, please contact DCADV at training@dcadv.org.



PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

The principles of ethics are models of exemplary professional behavior and express professionals' recognition of responsibilities to the public, victims/survivors, program participants, and to colleagues within and outside the field of domestic violence services. They guide Certified Specialists in the performance of their professional responsibilities and express the basic tenets of ethical and professional conduct. They are guided by core values and competencies that have emerged from domestic violence advocacy and the philosophical principles outlined in this document. **Please review and sign pages 3-4 of the Initial Application.**

I. Non-Discrimination

Domestic Violence Specialists shall not discriminate against service recipients or colleagues based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, education level, socioeconomic status, medical condition, or physical, cognitive or intellectual ability. Domestic Violence Specialists should broaden their understanding and acceptance of cultural and individual differences and, in doing so, render services, deliver programming, and provide information sensitive to those differences.

II. Competence

Domestic Violence Specialists shall master their specialty's body of knowledge and skill competencies, strive continually to improve personal proficiency and quality of service, and discharge professional responsibility to the best of their ability. Competence includes a synthesis of education and experience combined with an understanding of the context within which the application of service occurs. The maintenance of competence requires continual learning and professional improvement throughout one's career.

- a) Domestic Violence Specialists should recognize limitations and boundaries of their own competence and not use technique or offer services outside those boundaries. Domestic Violence Specialists are responsible for assessing the adequacy of their own competence for the responsibility to be assumed.
- b) Domestic Violence Specialists should seek supervision from their supervisors on competency and ethical issues. Additional supervision or guidance can be/should be sought from peers, other domestic violence service providers, and other Domestic Violence Specialists.
- c) When Domestic Violence Specialists have knowledge of unethical conduct or practice on the part of another professional, they have an ethical responsibility to report the conduct or practice to funding, regulatory, or other appropriate bodies.

III. Integrity

To maintain and broaden public confidence, Domestic Violence Specialists should perform all responsibilities with the highest sense of integrity. Personal gain and advantage should not subordinate service and the public trust. Due to the nature of domestic violence, Certified Specialists should pay particular attention to power and control dynamics in all professional capacities.

- a) All information should be presented fairly and accurately. Certified Specialists should document and assign credit to all contributing sources used in published material or public statements.
- b) Certified Specialists should not misrepresent either directly or by implication, professional qualifications, or affiliations.
- c) Certified Specialists should not be associated directly or indirectly with any service, product, individual, or organization in a way that is misleading.

IV. Nature of Services

Practices or programming shall do no harm to clients or the community in which they take place. Services provided by Certified Specialists shall be respectful and non-exploitive. Planning, implementation, and evaluation of services or programming should be evidence-informed or guided by best practices.

- a) Services should be provided in a way that preserves and supports the strengths and protective factors inherent in each culture and individual.
- b) Domestic Violence Specialists should use formal and informal structures to receive and incorporate input from service recipients in the development, implementation and evaluation of prevention and intervention services.
- c) Services and programming should facilitate shared power between the service provider and the service recipient.

V. Confidentiality

Domestic Violence Specialists are responsible for knowing and adhering to the federal, state, and individual agency/employer confidentiality regulations and policies relevant to their specialty or role.

VI. Ethical Obligations for Community and Society

Certified Specialists are expected to respect the laws of the United States and the State of Delaware while working to change those that may be unjust or discriminatory. Certified Specialists are expected to seek opportunities to champion processes that aim to transform organizations, communities and systems from those perpetrating, tolerating or condoning oppression, abuse and violence to those upholding equity and respect. Individually, Certified Specialists should adopt a personal and professional stance that promotes health and safety of all individuals and alternatives to violence and abuse.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

Applicants shall have no history or evidence of violent behavior for a minimum of five years immediately prior to the date of application. In addition, DCADV may consider the complete criminal history of an applicant and any history of substance abuse. DCADV reserves the right to report any unreported crimes or criminal acts that are disclosed by the applicant during the application review process. All applicants with a past criminal history may have said history reviewed by a DCADV attorney.

Why do we require a Criminal Background Check?

One of our goals is helping to keep survivors and the community safe, and this context is helpful as we vet and certify individuals as Domestic Violence Specialists. We recognize that there are a number of survivors engaged in the work of domestic violence prevention and services. We also recognize that survivors may find themselves with a criminal record related to the abuse they've experienced, including forced participation in criminal acts, being mistakenly arrested during police response to an abusive incident, or using substances to cope with the trauma of abuse. An existing criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant from becoming certified.




Application Guidance

Attach a copy of your Criminal Background Check results OR **Form A: Verification of Criminal Background Check**.

If you have had a Criminal History/Background Check completed by your current agency/organization, you may have a supervisor (or their designee) complete **Form A: Verification of Criminal Background Check**. A new background check is not required.

If you have completed a Criminal History/Background Check on your own (within the last five years), please attach a copy.

If you have not already completed a Criminal History/Background Check, you must submit to the necessary background checks and are responsible for the costs incurred. The applicant must submit a Criminal Background Check from the State of Delaware, from the state where the applicant resides, and from the state where the applicant works.



Background Check
Criminal Record
Test



How do I obtain a **Criminal Background Check**?

If you need to obtain a background check on your own, call **302-739-2528** to schedule an appointment. Please visit the [Delaware State Police website](https://dsp.delaware.gov/obtaining-a-certified-criminal-history/) (<https://dsp.delaware.gov/obtaining-a-certified-criminal-history/>) for the most current hours, locations, and procedures.

At all sites, you must provide photo identification such as a valid driver's license or state ID (from any state). You do not need a social security card or birth certificate.

The results will take 4-6 weeks and will be sent directly to you. **Once you have the results, you will need to make a copy for DCADV and include it with your application.**

Applicants who live or work in a state other than Delaware must also supply a Criminal Background Check from that state(s). The applicant must contact their Police Department or State Agencies for information on obtaining a Criminal Background Check.

SERVICE EXPERIENCE

A total of **2,000 hours of service experience** is required, regardless of the certification track. These hours may be completed as an employee, volunteer, or intern. All hours submitted as part of the Initial Application must have been completed **within the past five years. At least half of your service hours (at least 1,000 hours) must cover services provided in Delaware.**

? What kinds of service counts toward the 2,000 hour requirement?

There are three certification tracks: Direct Service/Systems Advocacy; Prevention; or Dual Certification. The work you do will determine which track you pursue.

Direct Service/Systems Advocacy

Direct service means responding to the needs of victims/survivors, perpetrators/those who cause harm, children, and/or other family members specific to their domestic violence experience via the following:

- Clinical treatment
- Individual counseling
- Family counseling
- Group counseling and/or facilitation of support group(s)
- Hotline counseling
- Intake assessment
- Client needs assessment
- Risk assessment and safety planning
- Crisis intervention
- Case management (matches available services to client's identified needs; secures and coordinates a variety of services for the client)
- Individual advocacy in the criminal and/or civil justice systems
- Advocacy for services and other needs of the individual client (housing, employment, etc.)
- Justice system and court orientation and accompaniment
- Consultation, notification, explanation of procedures and events, education, and victim/witness rights information for victims and/or witnesses involved in the criminal justice system

The majority of Certified Specialists fall into this category.

Systems advocacy may also be part of your role in providing services to victims.

Systems advocacy is a tool that advocates and other professionals use to ensure the rights and needs of victims of domestic/intimate partner violence as they negotiate systems on their journey toward healing and also to ensure that systems are working to address the prevention of domestic/intimate partner violence.¹ Examples of systems advocacy may include attending meetings of task forces/committees or advocating for policy or procedure changes to improve services to victims as whole.

Applicants may count **up to 500 hours of systems advocacy** toward the 2,000 direct service hours required for Initial Certification. Systems advocacy hours are **not** required, but simply an alternative to a portion of the required direct service hours.

If systems advocacy hours are completed as an intern or volunteer and **not** as part of the individual's job responsibilities, a log sheet must be completed for verification (**Form C: Verification of Domestic Violence Systems Advocacy Experience**).

Verification of participation and service must be provided from demonstrated leadership of a committee, task force, coalition, RSO, etc. **If you are employed by an agency or organization where systems advocacy is part of your job, you do not need to complete this verification log.**



What if I provide services **beyond domestic violence** in my work?

We recognize that domestic violence is not an isolated issue, and that the work you do may stretch beyond it. If you are working or volunteering in a position that is not specific to domestic violence, you may estimate the amount of time that you typically spend working on domestic violence-related services and use those hours toward your certification.

For example: Jamie works full-time (40 hours a week) as a victim service specialist in a local police department. They serve victims of all types of crimes, but spend about 25% of their time serving victims/survivors of domestic violence. Jamie would count 10 hours per week (25% of 40 hours) toward their 2,000-hour requirement for certification.

¹Sexual Violence: Policy & Systems Advocacy. (n.d.). http://www.vawnet.org/sexual-violence/policy.php?type=web_desc_TT Retrieved November 4, 2015.

Prevention

Primary prevention activities are intended to challenge and/or eliminate the root causes and occurrences of violence in our community. These activities can take place in a variety of settings, and may involve strategies that address issues at the individual, relationship, community, or societal levels.

What do we mean when we talk about prevention?²

TERTIARY PREVENTION aims to lessen the long-term negative effects after domestic violence has occurred, e.g. police intervention, counseling, and shelter.

SECONDARY PREVENTION aims to reduce the impact of domestic violence that has already begun, e.g. home visitation programs and support groups.

PRIMARY PREVENTION aims to stop domestic violence before it starts. Primary prevention can include building community; establishing gender equity; passing legislation; and changing the culture and conditions where we live, work, play, and pray. **In Delaware, some of our primary prevention efforts include fostering safe and healthy environments for youth; engaging influential adults and peers as allies in preventing violence; and strengthening economic opportunities for families.**

While all forms of prevention are essential, the **Prevention Certification track is focused on primary prevention.** Activities that fall under secondary or tertiary prevention should be counted under Direct Service/Systems Advocacy.

Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Presentations/program implementation
- Implementation/planning
- Evaluation/planning
- Building relationships/community partner collaboration
- Capacity building
- Data management
- Supervision of prevention activities/staff
- Prevention principles, policies and practices advocacy (organizational, regulatory, legislative, etc.)

² Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence. (2016). Our future depends on preventing domestic violence. Warwick, RI; RICADV.

DCADV recognizes that individuals working in the field of prevention often have experience providing direct service/systems advocacy services as well. Applicants seeking certification as a Domestic Violence Prevention Specialist may count **up to 500 hours of direct service/systems advocacy** toward the 2,000 service hours required for Initial Certification. A supervisor must verify all prevention/direct service hours. Direct service/systems advocacy hours are not required, but simply an alternative to a portion of the required service hours.

Dual Certification

We recognize that intervention and prevention work do not exist in silos. For those whose work experience has incorporated direct service, systems advocacy, and prevention, Dual Certification may apply.

Applicants seeking Dual certification in Direct Service/Systems Advocacy and Prevention must complete 2,000 total hours of service. Service hours must be recorded in both areas of practice. Hours in either area (Direct Service/Systems Advocacy or Prevention) must not amount to less than 30% of the total.

For example: Jordan works in a community-based domestic violence agency. They spend most of their time working in the shelter, and part of their time presenting educational programs to youth on gender equity. Jordan can count 1,400 direct service/systems advocacy hours and at least 600 prevention hours to qualify for Dual Certification.



What if I'm not sure **which certification track is right for me?**

Not sure where your work fits in? Reach out to DCADV at training@dcadv.org and we'll help you figure it out!



What if I have service experience **outside of Delaware?**

Service hours are not exclusive to Delaware employment, internship, or volunteer experiences. Applicants may include service hours from any applicable domestic violence service experiences with the proper verification. **However, at least 50% (1,000 hours) of all service hours must be provided in Delaware.**



Application Guidance

All applicants must complete the Domestic Violence Service Experience form on page 6 of the Initial Application.

In this section, you'll list each experience/position in which you provided domestic violence services. You will include the time period in which you worked, the number of hours, and the name of a supervisor or individual familiar with your work who can verify this information.

For **each** service experience you list, you will complete **Form B: Verification of Domestic Violence Service Experience**. You may make as many copies of this page as needed.

As the applicant, you will fill out the top portion. The bottom portion should be completed by a supervisor or individual familiar with your work who can verify this information.



TRAINING & EDUCATION

Individuals applying for a single certification (Direct Service/Systems Advocacy **or** Prevention) are required to complete a total of **70 clock hours** of Training and Education. Those applying for Dual Certification (Direct Service/Systems Advocacy and Prevention) are required to complete a total of **110 clock hours** of Training and Education.

Certified Domestic Violence Specialists are expected to stay informed of the most up-to-date best practices, programming, and resources. **Therefore, at least 50% of all Training and Education hours must have occurred within the last five years.**



What are **clock hours**?

Clock hours are the total number of hours that you spend receiving training/instruction.

Meals, breaks, and registration are not included, so the clock hours may be different than the time you actually spent at a training event.

For example: Taylor attended a training from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (7 hours). They had a one-hour break for lunch and two 15-minute breaks during the day. Taylor would receive 5.5 clock hours for this training event.



What kinds of training and education meet this **requirement**?

There are three major categories of training: Core Requirements; Direct Service/System Advocacy; and Prevention. Applicants must meet the required number of hours in the area that applies to the certification they are seeking.

Direct Service/Systems Advocacy applicants must complete

30 hours: Core Requirements
40 hours: Direct Service/
Systems Advocacy
Total: 70 hours

Prevention applicants must complete

30 hours: Core Requirements
40 hours: Prevention
Total: 70 hours

Dual Certification applicants must complete

30 hours: Core Requirements
40 hours: Direct Service/
Systems Advocacy
40 hours: Prevention
Total: 110 hours



Core Requirements for All Certification Tracks

I. Basic Domestic Violence Knowledge

Minimum: 11 hours

Training in this category should address the fundamental and foundational knowledge of domestic violence. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the history of domestic violence, gender issues and empowerment, family dynamics, risk assessment and safety planning, community resources, confidentiality/counseling ethics, and power and control. DCADV's signature training Domestic Violence 101 (held twice yearly) meets the requirements of this category.

II. Underserved/Culturally-Specific Populations

Minimum: 11 hours

Training in this category should focus on improving skills and practices in working with people who experience barriers to service due to cultural, linguistic, or economic status. Examples include, but are not limited to, working with older adults, adolescents, people with disabilities, immigrants, or people who identify as gay/lesbian/bisexual or transgender.

III. Emerging Issues and Practices in Domestic Violence

Minimum: 5 hours

Topics may include, but are not limited to, current trends in policy and practice, prevention/social change, DV and economic issues, grant writing for DV programs, DV in the workplace, medical response to DV, etc.

IV. Elective Topics

Minimum: 3 hours

Elective topic hours may consist of any combination of the training and education categories.

Total: 30 hours

Direct Service/Systems Advocacy Requirements

V. Intervention Services

Minimum: 10 hours

Training in this category may address interventions for both victims and those who commit domestic violence. Topics may include, but are not limited to, hotline operation, shelter services, crisis intervention skills, offender intervention programming, or services for individuals who are victims and/or charged with DV offenses.

VI. Psychosocial Issues

Minimum: 10 hours

Training in this category may address the impact of trauma on the victim. Other topics may include mental health/illness and substance abuse.

VII. Legal Issues

Minimum: 10 hours

Training in this category should address both the civil and criminal justice system. Topics may include Protection from Abuse Orders (PFAs) or civil orders related to custody, support, divorce, or visitation.

VIII. Children

Minimum: 5 hours

Training in this category should address the effects of domestic violence/trauma on children. Other topics may include child abuse, parenting/discipline, and supportive services for children.

IX. Challenges in Victim Advocacy

Minimum: 5 hours

Training in this category should address some of the barriers/challenges faced by individuals working with victims/survivors. Topics may include strategies for self-care, boundaries, values clarification, or liability issues for service providers.

Total: 40 hours

Prevention Requirements

X. Foundations of Prevention

Minimum: 16 hours

Training in this category should include the key concepts in the prevention of intimate partner/domestic violence. Topics may include the public health model/theory, risk and protective factors for intimate partner violence, the social-ecological model, principles of prevention, levels of prevention, prevention education/facilitation skills, the spectrum of prevention, and trauma-informed prevention.

XI. Planning and Evaluation

Minimum: 8 hours

Training in this category should enhance the applicant's skills in the planning and evaluation of prevention programming. Topics may include logic models, strategic planning, needs assessments, process and outcome evaluation, continuous quality improvement (CQI), data analysis, program/model fidelity and adaptation, and the continuum of evidence of effectiveness.

XII. Privilege and Oppression

Minimum: 8 hours

Training in this area should examine the social equalities and the root causes of health inequities that contribute to intimate partner violence. Topics may include anti-oppression, intersectionality, privilege, health equity, health disparities, determinants of health, and health indicators.

XIII. Evidence-Based Models and Prevention Strategies

Minimum: 8 hours

Training in this category should increase the applicant's skills in the implementation of evidence-based prevention programming. Other topics may include training on evidence-based intimate partner/sexual violence prevention programs, framing/narratives, community mobilization and coalition building, and social norms theory/marketing.

Total: 40 hours

Dual Certification Requirements

Applicants seeking Dual Certification must complete all three categories of training, for a grand total of **110 hours**.

? How do I document **training and education hours**?

There are two types of training and education documentation that must be submitted with your application.

1 **Training and Education Log**

Applicants may use either **Form D: Training and Education Log** (PDF form) or **Form E: Training and Education Spreadsheet** (Excel form).

Applicants may use their own tracking system in lieu of this log, as long as the required fields are included:

- Date of training event;
- Topic/title of training;
- Sponsoring agency;
- Number of clock hours;
- Training category/categories covered by the training;
- Type of training (online, in-person, etc.);
- Whether documentation has been included.

Supporting documents for all training and education events listed on the Training Log must be included.

Applicants who have completed the University of Delaware's Domestic Violence Prevention & Services (DVPS) Concentration or Minor may include an unofficial copy of their transcript in lieu of the Training Log. Please highlight or otherwise indicate the relevant courses.

2 **Supporting Documents**

Documentation for all training and education must be submitted with your application. This may include copies of certificates, training agendas, workshop descriptions, etc.

Each document should be **labeled in the upper right hand corner** with the applicable training category/categories (I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII), as well as the number of hours of training in each category.



How do I know **which category to use?**

As the person who attended the training event, you know what content was covered. Use your best judgment to determine where a training fits. You may also refer to the training agenda or materials to help determine the category.

Some trainings may cover more than one topic, so you may split the total number of hours across multiple categories, or put the entire event under one category.

For example: Alex attended a three-hour training on the impact of domestic violence and trauma on children. They may categorize this training a few different ways:

- a) VI- Psychosocial Issues (1 hour); VIII- Children (2 hours)
- b) VIII- Children (3 hours)
- c) I- Basic DV Knowledge (1 hour); VI- Psychosocial Issues (1 hour); VIII- Children (1 hour)

If your documentation or the category you chose is unclear, the Review Panel may request additional information to clarify the relevance of training.



I didn't receive a certificate. **How do I show that I attended a training event?**

There are a number of ways that you can verify your attendance.

- Certificate of attendance/participation
- Email from the event organizer confirming your attendance
- Training agenda, program booklet, or handouts
- Write a short synopsis of the training (main themes, highlights, things you've learned)

Additional Training & Education Guidance

List no more than 15 hours of in-service training. *In-service training* is defined as an internal training or staff development effort where professionals are trained and discuss their work with others in their peer group. In-service training is often facilitated by someone who is a colleague/coworker at the same agency.

For example, Helping Hands Victim Center is offering a lunch-and-learn training for their staff about vicarious trauma. The training is being led by one of the counselors at the Center. This would be considered an in-service training.

List no more than three hours for those topics in which the applicant was the trainer or facilitator for the training.

At least 25% of training hours for Initial Applicants (18 hours for Direct Service/Systems Advocacy OR Prevention Applicants; 28 hours for Dual Applicants) **must come from live, in-person training events.** The remainder of training hours may come from web-based trainings.



In-Person vs. Web-Based Training

Applicants are highly encouraged to participate in as many live training events as possible (either in-person or online). Live training events often provide more opportunities for engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking.

However, applicants may count training hours (with appropriate documentation) from the following sources:

- Live, in-person events (workshops, conferences, etc.)
- Live webinars/web-based courses
- Recorded webinars
- Web-based, asynchronous (self-paced) training modules



Will DCADV provide all the training I need?

DCADV strives to present training that meets certification training requirements.

However, applicants are allowed and expected to seek and document training from outside organizations. These trainings may include, but are not limited to, regional conferences, workshops presented by local agencies, or webinars hosted by national resource centers.

Suggested Sources of Training

There are many options and sources of training for Domestic Violence Specialists. Possible sources of training include, but are not limited to:

[The Center for the Study and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence](#)

[Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)

[Delaware Criminal Justice Council](#)

[Delaware Domestic Violence Coordinating Council](#)

[National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma, and Mental Health](#)

[National Network to End Domestic Violence](#)

[National Resource Center on Domestic Violence](#)

[National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#)

[Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center](#)

[PreventConnect](#)



The **University of Delaware's Concentration and Minor in Domestic Violence Prevention and Services (DVPS)** meets all training requirements for all three tracks for certification. No additional training is required for the initial application, though applicants are encouraged to stay up-to-date on current trends in the field.

Delaware State University offers a Domestic Violence Specialist Certificate Program, which requires the completion of 18 credits of coursework, plus additional internship hours with an agency specializing in domestic violence services under a DVS supervision. This program meets the training requirements for the Direct Service/Systems Advocacy track.

MENTORING

Applicants are required to participate in **12 hours of mentoring sessions** with a DCADV Certified Domestic Violence Specialist. The main role of the mentor is not to directly or physically supervise the applicant. Instead, the mentor and the applicant meet for 12 one-hour sessions (in-person or virtually) to engage in shared learning, discuss best practices, expand viewpoints, and develop themselves personally and professionally.

The mentoring process requires a commitment from both the mentor and the applicant. **Once applicants have completed at least half of their service hours (1,000 hours) and 30 hours of Training and Education, applicants are eligible to begin the mentoring process.** Applicants are asked to notify DCADV when they begin the mentoring process so we may offer support to both the applicant and the mentor.

How do I find a mentor?

Applicants may identify a mentor on their own, or they may contact DCADV to be paired with a Certified Domestic Violence Specialist. Students at the University of Delaware may also contact the Center for the Study and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence for mentoring support.

Can I have more than one mentor, or participate in group mentoring?

Absolutely! There are a number of reasons an applicant may work with multiple mentors. The applicant will complete **Form F: Mentoring Log** to identify each mentor and the session(s) they covered. All mentors must be currently certified as DCADV Domestic Violence Specialists. Additionally, group mentoring (one mentor meets with a group of applicants to complete mentoring sessions together) is permitted. In this case, the mentor(s) will sign **Form F: Mentoring Log** for each applicant.



Application Guidance

On page 10 of the Initial Application, list the name(s) of your mentor(s). Additionally, there are three pieces of mentoring documentation to include with the final application.

1 Form F: Mentoring Session Summary Log

The mentor and applicant will track all of their sessions on **Form F: Mentoring Session Summary Log** with the date, topic covered, and time spent in the session. Both parties (mentor and applicant) will sign this log.

2 Form G: Elective Topics Description

The applicant must explain why they chose each elective topic and how it applies to their work.

3 Form H: Mentoring Evaluation Form

The mentor will assess the applicant's understanding and willingness to abide by the Professional Code of Ethics of the Certified Specialist and sign this form.

? What topics are covered during mentoring sessions?

Direct Service/ Systems Advocacy	Prevention	Dual Certification
7 hours: Core Topics 5 hours: Elective Topics Total: 12 hours	7 hours: Core Topics 5 hours: Elective Topics Total: 12 hours	6 hours: Direct Service/ Systems Advocacy 6 hours: Prevention Total: 12 hours <i>Applicants may choose from the Core Topics in each track.</i>

Direct Service/Systems Advocacy Mentoring Topics

Core Topics (1 hour each)

- Dynamics of Domestic Violence
- Risk Assessment/Safety Planning
- Ethics/Confidentiality
- Crisis Intervention
- Documentation
- Legal Issues/Advocacy
- Referral/Resources

Elective Topics

Elective topics should enhance the applicant's skills and knowledge in areas related to domestic/intimate partner violence and be relevant to their work. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to: intake, treatment, substance abuse, case management, public outreach/training, immigration, teen dating violence, etc.

Prevention Mentoring Topics

Core Topics (1 hour each)

- Planning/Evaluation
- Privilege/Oppression
- Evidence-Based Models and Prevention Strategies
- Prevention Ethics
- Prevention Resources
- Emerging Issues/Challenges
- Intersectional Social Movements

Elective Topics

Elective topics should enhance the applicant's skills and knowledge in areas related to domestic/intimate partner violence and be relevant to their work. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to: community mobilization, facilitation skills, social norms framing/messaging, and social media/advocacy.

Dual Certification Mentoring Topics

Applicants seeking Dual Certification must complete six hours of mentoring in Direct Service/Systems Advocacy and six hours in Prevention. Applicants may choose from any of the Core Topics in each area.

EVALUATIONS

Part of being an effective domestic violence advocate/service provider includes developing positive collaborative relationships across the field. **Applicants should request a total of three evaluations be submitted on their behalf.**

These evaluations should come from the following individuals:

- One evaluation from an immediate or prior supervisor **(Form I)**

- One evaluation from a coworker or colleague (within the applicant's agency or that they work closely with) **(Form J)**

- One evaluation from a local community agency with which the applicant interacts. **(Form K)**

At least one of the evaluations must be from an individual affiliated with a local domestic violence program, i.e. CHILD, Inc., People's Place, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

Each evaluator should send their evaluation directly to the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (via USPS, fax, or email).



Self-reflection is also a critical part of professional development. Applicants are asked to answer the following questions as part of a self-evaluation:

- 1) What is your personal philosophy about domestic violence? Be sure to touch on its definition, root cause(s), preventability, and your views of victims and perpetrators.
- 2) Part of being an effective service provider or preventionist includes looking inward at our values, biases, and belief systems. How do your personal values and beliefs affect the services you provide?
- 3) The field of domestic violence is growing and changing. How do you go about learning new information and practices? How do you effectively apply newly-learned training concepts to your work?
- 4) Due to the nature of domestic violence, Certified Specialists should pay particular attention to power and control dynamics in all professional capacities. What methods do you use to create/facilitate shared power in your professional role with service recipients?
- 5) Collaboration is essential in the field of domestic violence prevention and services. How do you collaboratively engage with other professionals in your work?
- 6) How would you describe both your personal and professional support systems? What are your self-care strategies to prevent burnout and address secondary trauma? What role do organizations play in ensuring the wellness of their staff/team?



Application Guidance

Responses to each question may be as short as a few sentences, or as long as a few paragraphs. The applicant should answer each question separately, and number each response accordingly.

Each point must be addressed separately in the order listed. Do not answer the questions in narrative form.

Responses should be submitted in a document attached to the application materials.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION & REVIEW

As the applicant, you are responsible for ensuring your application is complete. A completed application includes:

- Completed application form
- Training and mentoring supporting documents
- Verification forms (service hours, background check)
- Evaluations
- Application fee

Once all of your materials are complete, you will submit them to DCADV via mail or email.



Delaware Coalition Against
Domestic Violence
Attn: DVS Certification
100 W. 10th St., Suite 903
Wilmington, DE 19801



training@dcadv.org

DCADV will confirm when the application is received and alert the applicant to any missing components. Once the application is complete, it will be sent to the Certification Review Panel.

i Application Fees

An **Initial Application fee of \$75.00** must be submitted with the completed application. All fees are non-refundable.

Payment may be made online at www.dcadv.org/dvs-payment; or by check (made out to Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence).

Appeal Processing Fee: \$125.00

The Appeal Processing Fee is only applicable to those applicants whose certification has been denied by the Certification Review Panel and who then wish to appeal that decision.

i Certification Review Panel

The Certification Review Panel consists of a cross-representation of individuals. The panel membership may include direct service providers and community members with relevant experience.

The Certification Review Panel adheres to the following decision process for certification:

- a)** Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. The Certification Review Panel will meet within 60 days of DCADV's receipt of a completed application for Domestic Violence Specialist Certification.
- b)** The Certification Review Panel will review and assess all applications for Domestic Violence Specialist Certification. The Certification Review Panel may, at its discretion, require an interview and/or additional references.
- c)** Once the Certification Review Panel has approved or denied certification, applicants will be notified of the decision in writing within ten business days.
- d)** The Certification Review Panel will present their decisions to the DCADV Executive Director, who will share the results at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the DCADV Board of Directors.
- e)** Applicants who are denied certification by the Certification Review Panel may appeal that decision following the Appeal Process as outlined. This request must be made in writing within 30 business days following their notification of the decision of the Certification Review Panel. However, the DCADV Board reserves the right to deny certification for cause.
- f)** The DCADV Board reserves the right to make modifications/changes to this process at any time.

i Appeal Process

If an applicant is denied certification by the Certification Review Panel:

- a)** The applicant has the right to appeal the decision of the Certification Review Panel. This appeal must be made in writing to DCADV's Executive Director within 30 business days from the receipt of the denial letter, and accompanied by a non-refundable Appeal Processing Fee of \$125.00.
- b)** A Hearing Officer of the DCADV Board and the Executive Director will review the appeal.
- c)** The decision of the Hearing Officer and the Executive Director will be based on the original application and documents previously submitted to the Certification Review Panel. The appeal will be reviewed within ten business days of receipt.
- d)** The recommendation of the Hearing Officer and the Executive Director will be presented to the DCADV Board for the final decision.
- e)** The DCADV Board reserves the right to make modifications/changes to this process at any time.

RECERTIFICATION

DVS Certification is valid for two years from the date that an application is approved. Once certification is awarded, applicants must meet all standards required for recertification every two years.

Those standards include:

- 1 Abide by the DCADV Domestic Violence Specialist Professional Code of Ethics
- 2 Complete 24 clock hours of Training and Education with documentation
- 3 Ensure that one evaluation is submitted on the applicant's behalf; from a supervisor, a colleague, or a local community agency

? How do I know when I'm due for recertification?

Certified Specialists are notified of their renewal date upon approval of their application. Applicants are responsible for keeping track of their recertification due date. **DCADV may send a courtesy reminder, but ultimately it is up to the applicant to ensure that all materials are submitted in a timely manner.**

? What happens if I miss the deadline or need more time?

Extensions (up to 6 months) are available by request. Requests must be submitted in writing to training@dcadv.org before the recertification due date. Requests must include the reason for the request and an estimated timeline for application completion. All requests will be reviewed by the Certification Review Panel.

If a recertification application is not received by the due date and there has not been an approved extension request, the certification will expire and the individual will no longer be considered a Certified Domestic Violence Specialist.

? What kinds of training and education meet this requirement?

All recertification applicants, regardless of certification track, must complete **24 hours** of continuing training and education. Training hours must include topics from **at least three** separate categories across Core Requirements and Certification Areas (Direct Service/Systems Advocacy or Prevention).

Dual Recertification applicants must complete the following:

- **At least 8 hours** across Direct Service/Systems Advocacy topics
- **At least 8 hours** across Prevention topics
- The remaining hours may be spread across any categories.

The Certification Review Panel may request additional information as needed to clarify the relevance of any training and education event listed on the applicant's training log.

Core Requirements	Direct Service/ Systems Advocacy	Prevention
I) Basic DV Knowledge	V) Intervention Services	X) Foundations of Prevention
II) Underserved/Culturally-Specific Populations	VI) Psychosocial Issues	XI) Planning and Evaluation
III) Emerging Issues and Practices	VII) Legal Issues	XII) Privilege and Oppression
IV) Elective Topics	VIII) Children	XIII) Evidence-Based Models and Prevention Strategies
	IX) Challenges in Victim Advocacy	

? What is the time frame for recertification training hours?

Applicants for recertification may count any training or education received **after the submission date** of their last DVS application.

Training hours listed on a training log from an earlier DVS application will not be considered.

Additional Training & Education Guidance for Recertification

List no more than 6 hours of in-service training. *In-service training* is defined as an internal training or staff development effort where professionals are trained and discuss their work with others in their peer group. In-service training is often facilitated by someone who is a colleague/coworker at the same agency.

For example, Helping Hands Victim Center is offering a lunch-and-learn training for their staff about vicarious trauma. The training is being led by one of the counselors at the Center. This would be considered an in-service training.

List no more than three hours for those topics in which the applicant was the trainer or facilitator for the training.

There is **no minimum number** of live and/or in-person training hours for Recertification Applicants. Any relevant training with documentation (including in-person trainings, live webinars, recorded webinars, web conferences, or e-learning modules) will be accepted.



In-Person vs. Web-Based Training

Applicants are highly encouraged to participate in as many live training events as possible (either in-person or online). Live training events often provide more opportunities for engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking.

However, applicants may count training hours (with appropriate documentation) from the following sources:

- Live, in-person events (workshops, conferences, etc.)
- Live webinars/web-based courses
- Recorded webinars
- Web-based, asynchronous (self-paced) training modules

RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION SUBMISSION & REVIEW

As the applicant, you are responsible for ensuring your application is complete. A completed application includes:

- Completed application form
- Training log and supporting documents
- Evaluation
- Application fee

Once all of your materials are complete, you will submit them to DCADV via mail or email.



Delaware Coalition Against
Domestic Violence
Attn: DVS Certification
100 W. 10th St., Suite 903
Wilmington, DE 19801



training@dcadv.org

DCADV will confirm when the application is received and alert the applicant to any missing components. Once the application is complete, it will be sent to the Certification Review Panel.

i Application Fees

A **Recertification Application fee of \$25.00** must be submitted with the completed application. All fees are non-refundable.

Payment may be made online at www.dcadv.org/dvs-payment; or by check (made payable to Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence).

Approved Extension/Late Fee: \$20.00

Fee applies when submitting an application after the deadline, or if the applicant has been approved for a deadline extension.

Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Attn: DVS Certification
100 W. 10th St., Suite 903
Wilmington, DE 19801

Phone: 302-658-2958

Fax: 302-658-5049

Email: training@dcadv.org

www.dcadv.org/DVS