

How to Find and Work with a CDA PD Specialist

(For the Birth to Five CDA Credential)

Once you've **completed your 120 hours of training, 480 hours of work experience, and your Professional Portfolio**, the next step is to work with a **Professional Development (PD) Specialist** to complete your **Verification Visit**. This is one of the final steps in earning the CDA Credential.

When to Choose a PD Specialist

Begin searching for a PD Specialist **after you've finished your portfolio but before submitting your CDA application**.

- Once your application is approved, you'll receive a **"Ready to Schedule"** notice from the Council for Professional Recognition.
 - You'll then **take the CDA Exam first** and schedule your Verification Visit afterward.
 - You have **6 months** from the time your application is approved to complete both the exam and visit.
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How to Find a PD Specialist

1. **Log in to YourCouncil**
 - Go to cdacouncil.org and log in to your YourCouncil dashboard.
2. **Access the Directory**
 - Select **"Find a PD Specialist"** from the left-hand menu.
3. **Search by Location**
 - Search by **zip code** (set at least a 5-mile radius) or by **city and state**.
 - Apply filters for **specialization** and **language** if you're completing your CDA in a language other than English.
4. **Review and Contact**
 - Click red pins on the map to see details for Specialists in your area.
 - Select **"Contact"** to send a request. Specialists typically respond within **48 hours**.



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- Once confirmed, enter the Specialist's **name and Council ID** into your CDA application.
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Scheduling Your Verification Visit

- After you've passed the **CDA Exam** and received your "Ready to Schedule" notice, coordinate a time for your Verification Visit.
 - During the visit, your Specialist will:
 - Observe you working with **either at least 3 infants/toddlers (birth–36 months) or 6 preschoolers (3–5 years)**.
 - Review your **Professional Portfolio**.
 - Conduct a **Reflective Dialogue** about your teaching practices.
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Key PD Specialist Requirements

- Must hold the **Birth to Five Endorsement**.
- Cannot be your **current employer, coworker, or anyone with a financial/contractual relationship** with you.
- Must be a CDA Council–approved Specialist listed in the official directory.
- If you cannot find a Specialist nearby, call the CDA Council at **1-800-424-4310** (Mon–Fri, 8 AM–5 PM EST).

