

# CDA Next Steps Tracker

## Step 1: Confirm you meet the basics

- Your CDA **setting** is correct (Infant/Toddler, Preschool, Family Child Care, etc.)
- You have **120 clock hours** of training
- You have **480 hours** of work experience in your setting
- Your professional portfolio items are complete and organized (digital files)

## Step 2: Organize your documents

**Create one folder (digital or binder) with:**

- Training certificates/transcripts
- Proof of work experience (as required)
- Portfolio documents (labeled clearly)
- Any required forms and IDs for application steps
- Notes for scheduling and deadlines

## Step 3: Submit your CDA application



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- Submit through the Council's application process
- Pay the required fee (or confirm funding/reimbursement)

#### Step 4: Watch for your “Ready to Schedule” notice

- Check email regularly (including spam/junk)
- Follow the instructions to schedule your exam (timelines may apply)

#### Step 5: Prepare for the exam

- Review course notes and competency standards
- Take practice quizzes (if available)
- Plan logistics (time off, transportation, quiet study time)

#### Step 6: Complete the verification visit (if required)

- Confirm your classroom/site details and schedule
- Ensure your environment and documentation are ready
- Use consistent routines and guidance practices during the visit

#### Step 7: Receive your results + credential

- Watch for credential decision updates
- Access your **digital credential** when awarded
- Save a copy for employment/licensing files

#### Step 8: Use your CDA

- Update your resume and professional profiles



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- Ask about raises/role changes where applicable
- Apply it toward next education steps (college credit, certificates, etc.)



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