

CDA Verification Visit

What is the CDA Verification Visit?

The CDA Verification Visit is part of the credentialing process where a trained professional (often called a **PD Specialist**) verifies your readiness through a structured review of your work. The visit typically includes:

- A **portfolio check** (making sure key items are complete)
 - An **observation** of you working with children
 - A **reflective conversation** about your teaching practices (what you do and why)
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Before the visit: what you should do

1) Confirm your setting matches your application

Make sure your classroom/setting aligns with your CDA type (Infant-Toddler, Preschool, Family Child Care, etc.). Mismatches can delay the process.

2) Organize your Professional Portfolio

Have your portfolio materials:

- Complete
- Easy to navigate
- Labeled clearly (folders/files named in a consistent way)

Tip: Create one folder called “CDA Verification Visit” and subfolders like:



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- Training & Certificates
- Portfolio Documents
- Family/Community items (if included)
- Lesson/activity examples
- Any required forms

3) Prepare your classroom like a normal successful day

You don't need a "perfect show day." You want a typical day that demonstrates:

- Safe supervision
- Predictable routines
- Positive guidance
- Developmentally appropriate activities
- Clean, organized environment

4) Plan your schedule

Try to schedule the visit on a day:

- You are the primary teacher/caregiver
- You have a routine you can follow without major disruptions
- You have enough children present for meaningful observation (if applicable)

5) If your visit is virtual, do a tech check



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- Test Wi-Fi, camera, audio
 - Plan where the device will be positioned
 - Reduce background noise
 - Have a backup plan (charger, second device, hotspot if possible)
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During the visit: what usually happens

While the exact order may vary, most visits follow a similar flow:

Step 1: Welcome + overview

You'll review what will happen during the visit and confirm basic details.

Step 2: Portfolio review

The PD Specialist may verify that required portfolio items are present and complete. This is usually a "check for completeness," not a critique of your writing style.

Step 3: Observation

They'll observe you working with children. They're often looking for:

- Warm, respectful interactions
- Safety and active supervision
- Clear expectations and routines
- Meaningful learning experiences (talking, reading, play, exploration)
- Positive guidance strategies (teaching skills, setting limits calmly)



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Step 4: Reflective conversation

You'll answer questions about:

- Why you chose activities
- How you guide behavior
- How you support development and learning
- How you communicate with families
- How you ensure health and safety

Helpful mindset: Use real examples from your day, not “perfect” textbook answers.

After the visit: what comes next

After the observation and reflective conversation:

- The PD Specialist submits the visit information as part of the overall process
 - You may need to wait for additional steps or final review (depending on the current Council process)
 - Keep your documentation saved until the credential decision is finalized
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How to prepare

The day before



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- Choose 1–2 simple activities you can run smoothly
- Print or open any materials you want available
- Set up learning areas so children can transition easily
- Confirm staff coverage so you aren't pulled away repeatedly

The day of

- Follow your normal routine
 - Use your consistent guidance scripts
 - Narrate expectations calmly (“Walking feet,” “Gentle hands,” “First/then”)
 - If something goes off-plan: stay calm and reset—how you respond matters
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Common mistakes to avoid

- Over-planning a “performance lesson” that disrupts your routine
- Scrambling to find portfolio items during the visit
- Talking too much during challenging behavior moments (short scripts work best)
- Trying to hide normal child behavior (tantrums happen—respond calmly and safely)



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