

# 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.

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## **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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