

General Policies and Procedures

Updated 2-2021

The Growing Futures Early Childhood Workforce Registry and its approval processes are designed to meet the needs of the early care and education workforce. At the same time, the Registry must adhere to high standards and ensure that its policies and procedures are clear, consistent, and congruent with state childcare licensing rules, federal directives, and national best practices for Registry systems. The policies and procedures listed here are not a comprehensive explanation of the Registry. For more information about specific policies and procedures, please contact the Registry office.

Registry Procedures

System Design

The Growing Futures Registry is a member of the National Workforce Registry Alliance, which has established best practice recommendations for state Registry systems. By following these practices, the Growing Futures Registry is aligned with other state professional development systems to support the state of North Dakota in reporting and aggregate its early childhood data nationally.

The Growing Futures Registry is also a member of the Registry Consortium, a group of states that operate using a specific database software product. This database is customized to meet the needs of North Dakota but collects and maintains its data to align with other state Registry systems. Growing Futures Registry services and information are available at www.ndgrowingfutures.org

Staff

Registry staff strives to be professional, courteous, and helpful. All staff have completed background checks to ensure that confidentiality and personal data gathered by the Registry is protected.

Registry Data Integrity

The Registry works hard to maintain its data to be reliable and verifiable. The Registry cross-checks documentation submitted by applicants for Registry memberships or training approval with outside organizations. Only verifiable documentation is included on an individual's professional development record.

- **Personal data:** Individuals are expected to submit and maintain accurate personal information. Records that are found to be inaccurate, incomplete, or falsified are de-activated.
- **Duplicate records:** The Registry works hard to ensure that each person's record is their own and that it is complete using the individual's date of birth and last five digits of social security. Periodic checks are carried out to merge and eliminate any duplicate records that may have been created for an individual.
- **Training data:** Trainers and training organizations must agree to abide by the policies and procedures established by the Registry approval system including the award of credit for training completion, attendance information, etc. and to submit to the Registry accurate information. The approved status of trainers or of a training organization is revoked if they are found to be in violation of Registry standards.

- **Data verification:** For-credit coursework must be documented with official transcripts sent directly to the Registry office from the institution that awarded the credit. Credential and licensures must be verifiable with the organization that issued the credential/licensure (the Registry verifies the validity of CDA Credentials, Center Director Credentials, and DPI licensures with the issuing organization).
- **Data Protection:** The Registry utilizes secure procedures to protect your data. Data collected directly from individuals is maintained in individual professional development records* and shared only with the individual record holder. Accuracy and privacy is ensured using the record holder's birth date and last five numbers of social security only to establish the account, after which the Registry data system assigns a random, unique Registry ID# to the individuals. Paper copies of personal information received in the Registry office (such as official transcripts) are kept in locked files until they are scanned into password-protected e-files, and the paper copy is then shredded. The Registry does not keep any paper documents on file.

Program information is imported to the Registry directly from the ND Department of Human Services Child Care Licensing division on a monthly basis. This information includes the program license number, business address and phone number, and license type. Programs can view this information at the Registry.

**NOTE: State Child Care Licensors can view a record of an individual's completed training.*

Participation

- Membership in the Growing Futures Registry is completely voluntary. There is no membership fee. However, only members can view and access their complete professional development records.
- Membership requires that a Registry application be completed and submitted online at www.ndgrowingfutures.org. As part of the membership application, individuals are expected to submit verifiable documentation of valid early childhood credentials such as the CDA or Aim4Excellence Center Directors Credential, all early childhood and/or child development formal coursework completed at higher education institutions.
- Member applications are reviewed to determine the preparation and qualifications the individual has for employment in the field of early care and education as defined by the Career Pathways. A Career Pathways category designation is then awarded.
- Members can download and print a membership card and a Certificate of Achievement showing the Career Pathways placement.
- Members may apply to have their Career Pathways designation updated when they have completed and can document sufficient additional training or education, by renewing their membership online at www.ndgrowingfutures.org. Verifiable documentation is required for Career Pathways changes.
- Participation in the approval process is required for trainers, training sponsor organizations, and training courses/events.

Fees

The Registry does not charge for membership. However, there may be fees for printing documents such as official Registry transcripts or other "extra" services provided by the Registry.

Policies

- **Email Addresses:** The Growing Futures Registry is web-based. Therefore, all Registry members, trainers, and training organizations are required to provide and maintain an active email address. For individual accounts, the email address must be a personal email registered in the individual's name, not a general company email address. All Registry information related to membership as well as trainer and training approval will be sent directly to the email address provided. This includes notification of approval, approval codes, and information to be used with approved training. The Registry is not responsible for information that is not delivered due to inaccurate or inactive email accounts.

- **Growing Futures Training Record:** The Registry is the official data tracking system for all training delivered to the early childhood workforce in North Dakota and applied toward childcare license renewal as well as placement on the Career Pathways. Only verified information is included on an individual's record to ensure that each Training Record is a complete and accurate record.
- **Official Transcripts:** A transcript is the record maintained by a higher education institution of the for-credit courses an individual has registered for, attempted, and completed through the institution. The Registry requires individuals applying to become Registry members and/or approved trainers to submit an official transcript to the Registry from every higher education institution from which the individual has received early childhood education and/or child development credits or degrees. ***An official transcript is a copy of the individual's transcript that is sent directly to the Registry office by the institution that awarded the credit.*** The Registry will not accept previously opened copies of a transcript, student copies, copies given to the student by the college or university, copies on file with an employer, or photocopies.
- **College / University credits:** The Registry is a system for approving and tracking training and education, however, it does not pre-approve for-credit courses. For-credit courses are added to an individual's Registry record after the fact. All courses are tracked as semester hours (quarter hours are converted to semester hours). Only courses directly applicable to Early Childhood are added to Registry records. To be accepted, at least 80% of the course content must focus on the developmental period birth-8 years of age and/or be applicable to working with young children in early care and education settings.

Note: The Registry only accepts for-credit courses that were completed with a letter grade of "C" or higher.

- **College credits for childcare licensing renewal:** College credits accepted by the Registry and added to an individual's record can apply toward annual childcare license renewal if it was completed in the individual's current licensing year. Course titles, date of completion, and credits earned will be recorded on the individual's training record.
- **Automatically Accepted:** The Registry has developed a list of training completed outside of the Growing Futures system that will be accepted and included on individual training records. These are events delivered for or with direct application to the early childhood workforce by professional state, regional, and national organizations. This guideline for accepted training can be found at www.ndgrowingfutures.org.
- **Registry Membership:**
 - Registry participation is voluntary.
 - Registry membership must be renewed annually.
 - Individuals applying to become a Registry member and who have completed ECE/CD for-credit coursework– whether they have earned a degree or not – must submit an official transcript to the Registry.
 - Only Registry members may access, view, and print their full professional development training record and other special reports, such as for CDA training completion.
 - Registry membership will be revoked if it is discovered that the member misused the Registry system, falsified information provided to the Registry, or otherwise violated Registry policies and procedures.
- **Training Approval:** Approved training is training that is submitted for approval to the Registry and that fully meets the criteria required for approval. Approved training is assigned a unique Growing Futures Training Approval code#.
 - Training must be submitted for approval by an approved training sponsor organization.
 - All approved training, unless otherwise designated, is listed on the Growing Futures on-line training calendar.

- Only approved training will be accepted toward license renewal or placement on the Career Pathways.
- All training must be approved regardless of whether the training is open to the public or offered only in-house to staff, association members, etc. (In-house training will not be posted to the Registry's online training calendar.) All training – both public and in-house – must follow the training approval policies.
- Level 1 Basic Licensing Training is approved for one time. A separate request for training approval must be submitted each time the training is offered even if the topic, description, location, timeframe, and trainer are the same each time.
- Conferences are approved as Registered Training.
- Level 2 Professional Training must be delivered by an Approved Trainer.
- Training events may not be advertised or promoted as “approved” until they are officially approved by the Registry and assigned an approval code.
- Training of less than 1-hour in length will not be accepted for approval and may not be added to an individual's professional development record.
- Training must be delivered in increments of 30 minutes.
- Training must be approved prior to delivery. Requests for training approval received after the date of the training will not be approved.
- Training must support at least one of the eight content areas of the **North Dakota Core Competencies for Early Education and Care Practitioners**. The Registry recognizes that many training sessions are comprehensive and may cover multiple competency areas. However, Level 1 Basic Licensing Training must be assigned to only one primary Core Competency content areas. Level 2 Professional Training may divide the course hours over several Core Competency content areas.
- Training must be directly applicable to the early childhood period and intended specifically for the Early Childhood workforce. Training content must be practically and realistically applicable to early childhood care and education settings and practitioners.
- Training must cover the content that was approved, exactly as submitted on the training approval request application
- Training must be presented by the trainer who was identified on the request for training approval.
- Any changes to a scheduled approved training must be reported to the Registry office prior to the scheduled event. Changes include but are not limited to cancellations, changes in dates, times or locations. Unexpected changes that occur during the training must be reported to the Registry office on the next business day. Unexpected changes include but are not limited to illness of the trainer that caused an early release or other unforeseen emergencies that prevented the training from being carried out in its entirety.
- Training time cannot be used to conduct business such as staff meetings, association business, personnel issues, etc.
- The length of the training must be consistent with the number of hours approved (approval is for contact hours only; breaks and meals are not counted toward training hours)
- Activities such as watching a video, reading a stand-alone article or book (e.g. not part of a training), or working with a consultant are not considered training and will not be approved or added to an individual's training record.
- Webinars are never approved as training no matter what organization offered the session, unless the webinar is part of a larger structured learning experience.
- Training hours cannot be given for time spent planning and/or implementing curriculum at a childcare program.
- **Credit for Attendance:**
 - To receive credit (e.g. clock hours) for attendance at a training event, an individual must provide the required information on and sign the official Growing Futures attendance sheet provided at the training and be present for the entire scheduled timeframe.

- If the accumulated time out of class extends beyond 10 minutes for any reason, the individual may not receive a Certificate of Completion nor will the training be listed on the individual's training record as completed. No clock hours will be awarded.
- **Partial training credit:** Approval status is specific to the number of hours approved and no exceptions or adjustment will be made for partial attendance. A trainer or training sponsoring organization MAY NOT give or award partial credit or reduced clock hours to an individual who has not been present for the entire approved timeframe of the training. Any trainer or sponsoring organization that is found to have done so will immediately lose the right to provide approved training.
- **Attendance / Sign-In Sheets:** The Registry requires that the standardized Registry Attendance Sheet be used at all approved face-to-face or onsite training events and that the original copy be uploaded to the Event after the training has been held. This applies to private in-house staff training as well as to events that are open to general registration.
 - Sign-in sheets must contain the following information about attendees. Note this information is required to accurately connect training attendance with the individual's record to ensure each person's training record is complete and accurate. Without this information, the Growing Futures Registry cannot guarantee that attendees at approved training will receive credit for attendance.
 - Name (First, Last)
 - Address (Street, City, State, Zip)
 - Phone number with Area Code
 - Email address (must be a personal account, not an employer's account)
 - Registry ID#
 - Signature
- **Certificates of Completion:** If the training sponsoring organizations provides a paper Certificate of Completion to attendees at the conclusion of a training event (and not before the conclusion), the certificate must include the following PRINTED on the certificate. Certificates that include handwritten information will not be accepted.
 - Approval code: This is a unique code issued for each training event and must be printed in full on the certificates*
 - Title of the training, exactly as given on the Request of Training Approval
 - Name of the trainer(s)
 - Name of the sponsoring organization
 - Date of the training
 - Number of clock hours
 - ND Core Competency area
 - Individual attendee's name
- To ensure that attendees receive appropriate credit for attendance, trainers or training sponsoring organizations must upload the original copy of the training attendance sheet to the Event within 7 business days of the training event end date.
- *A new approval code is issued every time the training is offered. Codes issued for previously held training cannot be reused.*
- **Out-of-State Training Acceptance:** Training provided by out-of-state entities is not pre-approved in North Dakota. Individuals who attend out-of-state training and wish to have it added to their Registry record must submit an Individual Training Approval Request. Approval is given on a course-by-course basis. Approval of one course does not guarantee that other courses offered by the training entity will be approved.
- **Trainer Approval:**
 - Only approved trainers may provide Level 2 Professional Training. Trainers must be approved prior to submitting requests for training approval.
 - Trainers are approved for a period of 2-year from the date of approval.

- Level 2 Professional Training trainers must be current Registry members and be placed on the Growing Futures Career Pathways at Category G-J.
 - All approved trainers must have a current copy of their resume or CV on file with the Registry,
 - Trainers and training sponsoring organizations must agree to abide by the terms and conditions outlined in the *Ethical Obligations and Professional Responsibilities* document.
 - Trainers will be approved only to present training that correlates to their education and background. For example, individuals whose background is nutrition will not be approved to present training on child development or learning environments.
 - Trainers or training sponsoring organizations who fail to comply with the policies and procedures of the Registry or who act in ways that undermine the integrity of the Registry will have their approval status permanently revoked.
- **Trainers with Expired Registry Certificates:** Trainers with expired trainer approval cannot submit requests for training approval or be assigned to present an approved training.

Growing Futures Registry
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www.ndgrowingfutures.org