



Portfolio Review Process to obtain Northern Lights Career Development Center Level I Certificate

Introduction

The **Level I** certificate is based on the Level I Northern Lights Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals (more information about the Core Competencies is available on the Northern Lights website). For a full description of Level I see the Level I fact sheet and the Career Ladder on the Northern Lights website: www.northernlightscdc.org. There are three ways to achieve a Level I certificate. Portfolio review is one option. This document describes the process and includes the application for Portfolio review. *Before you begin, please examine all three options to ensure Portfolio review is the best option for you.*

3 Pathways to a Level I Certificate

To achieve a Level I certificate the individual submits a completed Level I application to Northern Lights Career Development Center with documentation of:

- 1) at least one year experience working with young children in a group;
- 2) a current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP); and
- 3) documentation of successful completion of any *one of these three education options*:
 - *Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals* course, OR
 - One college course (three credits) including early child development *plus* two workshops: Basic Specialized Care, and Introduction to Child Care Licensing, *plus* one approved observation of you working with children OR
 - 45 hours of verified training in the five core knowledge areas, and a Northern Lights approved portfolio which includes evidence in writing of how you have met the Level I Core Competencies

The Northern Lights website www.northernlightscdc.org has a full description of each option as well as the Level I application.

Given all three options Portfolio review may be the hardest way to achieve a Northern Lights Level I certificate. The process includes collecting and organizing evidence and documentation to demonstrate that you have achieved the knowledge, skills and experience in the 5 core knowledge areas at Level I, as outlined in the *Core Competencies for Early Childhood Providers* (available on the Northern Lights web site). This option is especially designed for those individuals who don't or can't pursue the other two options and -

- already have significant experience working (volunteered or paid) with young children in groups and are currently working with a group of young children, preferably in a program regulated by the Vermont Child Development Division;
- have accumulated at least 45 hours of professional development (training) that is well documented;
- are organized and comfortable with writing, details, collecting and preparing paperwork;
- can persist in a project in all its requirements;
- use the Northern Lights website and other online resources; and
- are able to commit to a 3-6 month process .

Level I Certificate: Portfolio Review Process

The portfolio review process is designed to assess whether an individual has the documented training and skills to meet the requirements for a Level I certificate. The steps below outline what the applicant and the review team do, to complete the Level I Portfolio review process.

- Step 1-** Interested individual reviews this document and the Northern Lights website to learn about the criteria and the three options for achieving a Northern Lights Level I certificate. If you decide to pursue a Level I certificate through a Northern Lights Portfolio review go to step 2.
- Step 2-** Applicant sends a letter requesting approval to begin Portfolio review for a Level I certificate, to Northern Lights Career Development Center, CCV, P.O. Box 489, Montpelier, VT. 05601. In this letter include your contact information and e-mail address, years of experience, current work setting, a short summary describing your educational background such as training, courses, degrees, certifications (or a resume with all this information) and briefly explain why the Portfolio review is the best option for you to achieve a Level I certificate.
- Step 3-** Northern Lights staff will review your request and determine if your background and experience makes you a good candidate for Portfolio review. Northern Lights will notify you by e-mail within 3 weeks of receiving your letter regarding your request.
- Step 4-** If Northern Lights **accepts your request** begin assembling your portfolio. If Northern Lights staff decline your request, contact your Resource Development Specialist to explore your next steps.
- Step 5-** Submit your original completed portfolio, one copy of your portfolio, your completed application and a \$50 review fee (contact Northern Lights Career Development Center about who to make the check out to) and mail to Northern Lights at the address above). There is no pre-set review schedule. Northern Lights staff review Portfolios when they are received.
- Step 6-** Northern Lights will let you know we received your portfolio. Two assessors will review it.
- Step 7-** In 6 to 8 weeks after Northern Lights Career Development Center receives your portfolio, the reviewers will notify you about the outcome of the review.
- Step 8-** If your Portfolio review is successful and you meet all the criteria for a Level I certificate your application for a Level I certificate will be processed. If your portfolio review is not successful and all criteria are not met, Northern Lights will inform you about next steps.

Portfolio Reviewers

Two early care and education professionals review each portfolio. They are chosen by the Northern Lights Career Development Center, based on their experience and knowledge in the field of education and the core competencies. The individual reviewers will have no perceived or actual conflict of interest with the applicant. Reviewers assess the portfolio based on the completion of required contents, clarity of organization, quality of work, and the breadth and depth of the individuals' experience and knowledge.

Note: If the portfolio is incomplete Northern Lights will return the portfolio and the individual will be given 60 days to resubmit it.

OTHER RESOURCES on the Northern Lights website

- **Level I and Fundamentals** - resources and readings
- **Career ladder** – information about the required observation of the practitioner and the application for a Level I certificate
- **BFIS** (Bright Futures Information System) - information about your online resume and the Course Calendar to find Basic Specialized Care and Introduction to Child Care Licensing training
- **IPDP**- information about developing an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)

Northern Lights Level I Portfolio Review: APPLICATION

The information you supply in this application will be verified.

Full, legal Name **Date**

Preferred phone **email**

Address: Street, Box Number, Apt #

City **State** **zip** **code**

BFIS Credential Account Number: _____
If you work in regulated child care, License or Registered Program Certificate # _____

Workplace (s) and Town	Supervisor or Resource Development Specialist: contact number	Dates (month + year) of work:	
		From	to

Check here if work information continues onto additional pages

Applicant signature:

As the applicant for the Level I portfolio review, I confirm that the person who observed me and completed the *Observer of the Practitioner* form, was approved by my regional Resource Development Specialist. Applications with inaccurate or misleading information will not be processed.

With my signature, I attest that the information I have stated in this application is correct and true.

Signature **Date**

Any questions about the application and review process can be addressed to:

Northern Lights Career Development Center PH: 802-828-2876
 EMAIL: nancy.sugarman@ccv.edu

Completed Application and Portfolio should be submitted to:

MAIL: Northern Lights Career Development Center; CCV, PO Box 489, Montpelier VT. 05601
(Application continued on next page)

ALSO upon approval of your Portfolio, if you meet the following criteria Northern Lights Career Development Center will forward your application to the Vermont Child Development Division (CDD) for consideration of a \$100. Recognition Bonus.

- ✓ You are a Vermont resident.
- ✓ The education requirement above is completed in the last two years.
- ✓ You have worked in a Vermont regulated child care program for the past six months.
- ✓ You are not a public school employee paid on the teacher salary schedule.
- ✓ You plan to stay working in regulated child care for at least one year from application.
- ✓ The program where you work meets regulatory requirements (see below)

I certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct; I also certify that the following statements are true:

1. My program will comply with applicable eligibility criteria of the Child Care Development Fund including not discriminating or barring participation on the basis of race, religion, sex, color, handicap or national origin.
2. I have worked directly with children at a CDD regulated child care facility for the past six months.
3. I plan to work in regulated child care or afterschool care setting serving Vermont children for at least 1 year after receiving any grant funds from the CDD.
4. I am a Vermont resident.
5. I am not a public school employee who is paid on the teacher salary schedule for my work in the regulated care setting.
6. My program, or the program with which I am employed: (choose one)
 - Is in good regulatory standing with the Child Development Division, which means that I also certify that within the past twelve months all regulatory violations are corrected, no "Parental Notification letter/s" have been mailed and the program does not have a pattern of repeated regulatory violations with the CDD. OR
 - Has received the following violations, but no Parental Notification Letter violation in the previous 12 months. I have attached a statement detailed the violations(s) and what I am personally doing to make sure the violations do not happen again.

Applicant's Signature: _____ **Date** _____

If your application meets the requirements above, Northern Lights will pass it on the Child Development Division for their consideration for the Recognition Bonus. Bonuses are only available for the highest level to which you are qualified. For Questions about the Child Development Division Recognition Bonus contact: Heather Mattison: 802-241-4551or 800-649-2642 ext. 4551

<p>For State Use Only</p> <p>Date Received: _____ Invoice #: _____</p> <p>Reviewed/approved: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Payment entered: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>License check: _____</p>	<p>Program Manger Approval/Denial</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Approved: \$ _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Denied</p> <p>Signature: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>
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Portfolio Requirements

The following grid details what an individual applying for a Northern Lights Level I certificate through the Portfolio review process must provide to the Northern Lights Career Development Center. A complete Portfolio includes documentation as described in each of the 9 areas below. Please also check that you have done the three things below, before you submit your Portfolio. Northern Lights will not process incomplete Portfolios.

- Include the application and all required documents with your submitted Portfolio.
- Number the documents in your portfolio to align with the numbers in the grid below.
- Submit an original and one copy of the application and Portfolio to Northern Lights.

REQUIREMENT	DOCUMENTATION (Number all portfolio documentation so it corresponds with the requirement number)	SUB-MITTED ✓
<p>1. <u>Work with young children</u> One year or more of regular work with a consistent group of young children between the ages of birth to six. You also need to be working currently. Work may be volunteer or paid but cannot only be with children in your family. Work in regulated child care is preferred.</p>	<p>Signed and dated letter from your supervisor (or local Resource Development Specialist if you are self-employed) stating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where you work, • for how long • what your responsibilities are 	
<p>2. <u>Professional Development Documentation</u> At least 45 hours of professional development within the past 5 years covering the 5 core knowledge areas (see attached <i>Training grid by Core Knowledge Area</i>) with documentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed <i>Training Grid by Core Knowledge Area</i> (below) • documentation for each of the trainings listed in the grid including Basic Specialized Care (6 hours) and training in child care licensing regulations as required. 	
<p>3. <u>Read and write about 2 articles</u> Choose and read 2 articles from those posted on the Northern Lights FUNDAMENTALS Webpage (in the articles section of each module) . Then write a 2-3 page reflective paper about each article including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Title, author and why you chose this article b. Summary of the content and what you learned as a result of reading this article (what stands out) c. What you will apply from this article, to your work with young children (be specific) d. Questions, thoughts or concerns this article raises for you 	<p>Two written papers (2-3 pages each) that address the 4 questions (a-d)</p>	

REQUIREMENT	DOCUMENTATION (Number all portfolio documentation so it corresponds with the requirement number)	SUB-MITTED ✓
<p>4. <u>Two written observations of children</u> Write 1-2 pages each describing what you observed and an analysis of what the behavior may mean. The child must be between the ages birth to six.</p>	<p>Completed a) Child Observation #1; b) Child Observation #2 (see CHILD OBSERVATION forms on Northern Lights website www.northernlightscdc.org under FUNDAMENTALS)</p>	
<p>5. <u>Complete the self –assessment</u> using the Core Competencies for Level I (on Northern Lights website). a. Complete the checklist for Level I competencies b. Write a short reflection on each of the 5 core knowledge areas giving an example of how you show competency in this area. (3-5 pages total)</p>	<p>a) Written self assessment: use the Level I core competencies (on Northern Lights website: complete the writable PDF and print) and b) Written examples of your competency in the 5 core knowledge areas.</p>	
<p>6. <u>Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)</u> a. identify at least three professional development goals based on your self –assessment (#5 above) b. strategies, resources and a timeline to reach those goals</p>	<p>Completed IPDP. Use the form on the Northern Lights website: www.northernlightscdc.org</p>	
<p>7. <u>Community Resources</u> Collect at least 5 community agency phone numbers, websites, information pamphlets and/or brochures that are resources you will use when making referrals for help with your work with children or to share with families when they have questions</p>	<p>Documentation of 5 or more useful community support or professional resources (the 2 Copies can be just the cover sheet if brochures or other materials are difficult to copy)</p>	
<p>8. <u>Observation of you by an early childhood expert</u> Observation of you working with young children. The expert may not be related to you or the children with whom you work. The <i>Observation of the Practitioner form</i> (on the Northern Lights website- Career Ladder page) describes what you need to do to prepare for and complete this assignment. Your regional Resource Development Specialist will help you find an observer.</p>	<p>Completed and signed <i>Observation of the Practitioner</i> form. Observer must be approved by your regional Resource Development Specialist (see application page- signature)</p>	
<p>9. <u>Application and Portfolio</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Two page application signed by you on each page <input type="checkbox"/> Completed (this) Portfolio Requirement page <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Training Grid <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of 45 hours of professional development as listed in the Training Grid <input type="checkbox"/> All other documents described in the Portfolio Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Check for \$50. for Review fee 	<p>An original and one copy of the signed application and all the required documentation (see checklist on left) organized by the numbers in the left column of this grid.</p>	

Training Grid by Core Knowledge Area (see #2 Portfolio Requirements)

Fill in the grid below with the title and number of hours of professional development you are submitting with your Portfolio. You need to submit evidence of a total of 45 hours of training or coursework with at least 6 hours in each of the 5 core knowledge areas PLUS Basic Specialized Care training (6 hours) and training about child care licensing regulations.

Your Portfolio should also include documentation for each of the activities you list in the grid below. Acceptable documentation of professional development may include one or both:

- 1) A print out of your Bright Futures Information Systems (BFIS) Quality Credential Account professional development page listing the required training as verified (see www.northernlightscdc.org for more information)
- 2) Attach paper copies of documentation forms or certificates; each must include: sponsor name/logo; your name; sponsor or instructor signature; title and description of training; date/time/total hours .

Northern Lights Career Development Center Core Knowledge Areas	List Title of Trainings (at least 6 hours of training in each in of the 5 core knowledge areas is required)	Total Hours
1 Child Development		
2. Families and Communities		
3. Teaching and Learning		
4. Healthy and Safe Environments		
5. Professionalism and Program Management		
<input type="checkbox"/> Basic Specialized Care (6 hour) <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Licensing regulations (2-2.5 hr)		