DELAWARE CDA® SERVICES NAVIGATION GUIDE

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO OBTAIN MY CDA®?

1. 120 Hours of Training
2. 480 Hours of Experience
3. Professional Portfolio
4. CDA® Exam
5. Verification Visit

COMPARE	Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Professional Preparation: Early Childhood Education (PP:ECE)	Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood & ECIC iCDA	Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood & ECIC Portfolio Preparation	ECIC CDA® Voucher Only	ECIC CDA® Achievement
This may be right for me if...	I need the 120 clock hours, help with the portfolio and exam, and prefer on-site observations and live instructor-led classes	I need the120 clock hours, help with the portfolio and exam, and prefer self-paced online modules with on-site coaching	I already have the 120 clock hours and need help assembling my portfolio and exam support	I have completed the 120 clock hours and portfolio independently and need the assessment fee paid	I have already earned my CDA® on or after September 1, 2026, and would like to receive my completion and retention stipends
Program Length	9 or 12 month options	9 or 12 month options	3 months	N/A	N/A
Class Type	Hybrid	Hybrid	Virtual	N/A	N/A
Schedule/Location	9 months: 2 virtual classes per week (2.5 hours each); 12 months: 1 virtual class per week (2.5 hours); One-time only - Dover location kickoff meeting (5 hours on a Saturday)	Online Independent modules for 120 clock hours; monthly virtual community of practice meetings (1 hour online); One-time only - Dover location kickoff meeting (5 hours on a Saturday)	Monthly virtual community of practice meetings (one hour online); One-time Only - Dover location kickoff meeting (2 hours on a Saturday)	Participant independently completes CDA® requirements and then applies to the ECIC when they are ready for the CDA® voucher to take the exam and observation	N/A
Coaching/Support	On-site classroom coaching 2×/month; Optional - in-person monthly working sessions for portfolio support all counties	On-site classroom coaching 2×/month; Optional - in-person monthly working sessions for portfolio support all counties	Optional - in-person monthly working sessions for portfolio support all counties	N/A	N/A
Pre- and Post-Observations	Included – These observations will be conducted to support coaching and show growth over time	Included (DIEEC Only) – These observations will be conducted to support coaching and show growth over time	Not included	N/A	N/A
120 Clock Hour Training	Included – Completed live on Zoom during workshop sessions	Included – Completed independently using Early Education Pathways (EEP)	Not included; must already have 120	Not included; must already have 120	Not included; must already have 120
Portfolio Support	Included	Included	Included; primary focus	Not included; must already have portfolio completed	Not included; must already have portfolio completed
CDA® Exam Prep	Included - Must complete exam prep modules in order to receive voucher to take exam	Included - Must complete exam prep modules in order to receive voucher to take exam	Included - Must complete exam prep modules in order to receive voucher to take exam	Included - Must complete exam prep modules in order to receive voucher to take exam	Not Included; must have ready passed exam
CDA® Assessment Voucher	$525 fee covered	$525 fee covered	$525 fee covered	$525 fee covered	Not provided; fee already paid or covered

DELAWARE CDA® SERVICES NAVIGATION GUIDE

ECIC & DIEEC CDA® Programs | Continued

COMPARE	Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Professional Preparation: Early Childhood Education (PP:ECE)	Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood & ECIC iCDA	Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood & ECIC Portfolio Preparation	ECIC CDA® Voucher Only	ECIC CDA® Achievement
Eligibility	HS diploma/GED Employed 20+ hours/week in DE licensed child care	HS diploma/GED; Employed 20+ hours/week in DE licensed child care	HS diploma/GED Employed 20+ hours/week in DE licensed child care Completed the 120 clock hours of training	HS diploma/GED Employed 20+ hours/week in DE licensed child care Completed the 120 clock hours of training	Employed 20+ hours/week in early care and education Obtained the CDA® Credential
Books/Materials	Essentials Book, Essentials Workbook, Competency Standards Book - Included	Essentials Book, Essentials Workbook, Competency Standards Book - Included	Competency Standards Book - Included	Not provided	Not needed
Technology	Laptop/tablet	Laptop/tablet	Laptop/tablet	Not provided	Not provided
Retest Support	One CDA® retest covered	One CDA® retest covered	One CDA® retest covered	One CDA® retest covered	Not needed exam already completed
Participant Cost	No cost to participant	No cost to participant	No cost to participant	No cost to participant	No cost to participant
Support Stipend	$500 midway: 4.5 months (9-month) or 6 months (12-month)	$500 midway: 4.5 months (9-month) or 6 months (12-month)	$500 after 3-month cohort	$0	$0
Completion Stipend	$0; CDA® upload required for retention	$0; CDA® upload required for retention	$0; CDA® upload required for retention	$0; CDA® upload required for retention	$500 upon CDA® credential upload
Retention Stipend	$1,000 after 6 months continuous ECE employment for at least 20 hours per week	$1,000 after 6 months continuous ECE employment for at least 20 hours per week	$1,000 after 6 months continuous ECE employment for at least 20 hours per week	$1,500 six months after CDA® credential date, with continuous ECE employment for at least 20 hours per week	$1,000 six months later after continuous ECE employment for at least 20 hours per week
Special Cohort Types	Family Child Care	Spanish-speaking and Family Child Care *120 hours for Spanish speaking cohorts completed through Quorum®	Spanish-speaking and Family Child Care	N/A	N/A
How To Get Started	Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the CDA® Comprehensive Application	Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the CDA® Comprehensive Application	Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the CDA® Comprehensive Application	Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the Voucher Only Application	Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the CDA® Achievement Application (available 11/1/2026)

DELAWARE CDA® SERVICES NAVIGATION GUIDE

Other Available CDA® Programs

COMPARE	Delaware Technical Community College **Professional Preparation: Early Childhood Education (PP:ECE) Clock Hour Training**	**Sussex Tech Portfolio Preparation**	**Wilmington University EPP**
This may be right for me if...	I need the 120* clock hours and will finish other CDA® requirements separately *The CDA® requires 120 clock hours of professional education. DTCC's training program provides 132 clock hours	I have completed the 120 clock hours of training and need portfolio and exam-preparation support, and want a completely online program (except first meeting)	I need the 120 clock hours, help with the portfolio and exam, and I want completely online CDA® coursework, and weekly Online Live cohort meetings
Program Length	Terry (Dover) – TBD - Weeks/Months Owens (Georgetown) – 23 Weeks/6 Months Stanton (Wilmington) – 11 Weeks/3 Months	10 weeks	15–18 weeks
Class Type	Hybrid: in-person and online	Virtual	Virtual – Online Live weekly sessions
Schedule/Location	Terry (Dover): Mon/Wed Owens (Georgetown): Tue/Thu Stanton (Wilmington): Tue/Wed/Thu	Meets virtually 1x per week for 2 hours First meeting 2 hours in person in Georgetown, to complete all paperwork and platform registration	Online Live cohorts available on Tuesday evenings, 5:30-8:30 PM and Wednesday evenings, 5:30-8:30 PM
Eligibility	GED or higher No employment requirement Additional enrollment documentation needed (inquire through workforce training, link and number below)	Employed in DE licensed child care Employer must have fewer than 50 workers Must have a social security number Enrollment documentation	Employed in DE licensed child care Employer must have fewer than 50 workers Must have a social security number Enrollment documentation
120 Clock Hour Training	120* clock hours included *The CDA® requires 120 clock hours of professional education. DTCC's training program provides 132 clock hours.	Not included; must already have 120	120 hours included
Portfolio Support	Not included	Included	Included
CDA® Exam Prep	Not included	Included	Included
CDA® Assessment Voucher	Not included	Included	Included

DELAWARE CDA® SERVICES NAVIGATION GUIDE

Other Available CDA® Programs | Continued

COMPARE	Delaware Technical Community College **Professional Preparation: Early Childhood Education (PP:ECE) Clock Hour Training**	**Sussex Tech Portfolio Preparation**	**Wilmington University EPP**
Coaching/Support	All DTCC students have access to free tutoring at all campuses. The instructor provides support for students as needed	Portfolio and exam-preparation support	Online Live weekly sessions
Pre- and Post Observations	Not included	Not included	Not included
Books/Materials	Book included in cost of tuition – Essentials for Working with Young Children, Revised Third Edition	Not provided	Essentials Book - Included
Technology	Not provided; computer lab available	Not provided	Not provided; computer lab available
Retest Support	Not provided	One retest provided through the ECIC, if eligible; Must create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the Voucher Only Application	One retest provided through the ECIC, if eligible; Must create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the Voucher Only Application
Participant Cost	Certification is covered under SEED; Must apply for financial aid	No cost to participant; cost covered by Elevate Delaware	No cost to participant; cost covered by Elevate Delaware
ECIC Stipend Structure	Not included with DTCC clock hour training. Upon completion, participants may enter DIEEC/ECIC Portfolio Preparation or complete CDA® requirements independently and apply for ECIC CDA® Voucher Only. Eligibility requirements apply.	Potential CDA® Achievement: $500 on credential upload; $1,000 after 6 months continuous ECE employment Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the CDA® Achievement Application (available 11/1/2026)	Potential CDA® Achievement: $500 on credential upload; $1,000 after 6 months continuous ECE employment Create or sign in to - DE ECE Portal Account & complete the CDA® Achievement Application (available 11/1/2026)
Special Cohort Types	N/A	N/A	Spanish-speaking option (virtual on Thursdays)
How to Get Started	Call workforce training/development and register: Terry (Dover): 302-857-1400 Owens(Georgetown): 302-259-6330; Stanton (Wilmington): 302-830-5204;	Contact Sussex Tech: Phone: 302-856-0961 Email–adultedoffice@sussexvt.k12.de.us	Click here to check eligibility and register Phone: 302-356-2455

Council for Professional Recognition

CDA® Child Development Associate® National Credentialing Program

Not sure which CDA® pathway is right for you? Contact the ECIC at 302-857-7400.