Title 24: Mental Health

Part 3: DMH Community Support Specialist Standards & Requirements

Part 3 Chapter 1: General Information

Rule 1.1 About the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) administers the public mental health service delivery system in Mississippi. DMH was created in 1974 by an act of the Mississippi Legislature, Regular Session. The statute placed mental health, alcohol/drug abuse, and intellectual/developmental disabilities programs into one agency. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health is governed by the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health, a nine-member board whose members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate.

B. DMH Mission: "Supporting a better tomorrow by making a difference in the lives of Mississippians with mental illness, substance abuse problems and intellectual/developmental disabilities one person at a time."

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.2 Statutory Authority

A. Statutory authority for the certification of DMH Community Support Specialists was granted in 1996 by the Mississippi Legislature.

B. Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* authorizes the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health (through DMH) "to certify/license case managers (i.e., community support specialists), mental health therapists, mental retardation (i.e., intellectual/developmental disabilities) therapists," and others as deemed appropriate by the Board. In 1997, authority was expanded to include the certification/licensure of "mental health/retardation (i.e., intellectual/developmental disabilities) program administrators" and "addiction counselors."

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.3 About the DMH Community Support Specialist Credential

A. DMH professional credentials are designed primarily for individuals who are not already professionally credentialed and who are employed in Mississippi's state mental health system.

B. **Employment in Mississippi's "state mental health system," as defined in this document, is a mandatory requirement to apply for and hold a DMH professional credential.**

C. The DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program is designed to promote the provision of quality community support services in Mississippi's "state mental health system."

D. Full certification attests to an individual's:

1. Educational background;
2. Relevant work experience;
3. Demonstration of mastery of basic knowledge pertinent to the field of state mental health system community support and/or Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) Waiver support coordination service provision;
4. Continued participation in relevant educational activities, through the continuing education (CE) renewal requirement; and,
5. Agreement to adhere to the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct.*

E. *Prior to January 1, 2013, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health's "DMH Community Support Specialist" professional credentialing program was known as the "DMH Case Management Professional" professional credentialing program*.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.4 DMH Community Support Specialist Certification Levels

The DMH Community Support Specialist Credentialing Program has three (3) levels of certification:

A. **Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist (PCCSS)**

1. The Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist (PCCSS) credential is a temporary and nonrenewable credential. *(This credential was formerly known as "Provisionally Certified Case Management Professional – PCCMP").*
2. Provisional Certification (PCCSS) allows qualified individuals who do not meet the requirements to apply directly for full certification (CCSS) to become temporarily credentialed while pursuing full certification.
3. Provisional certification is valid for up to two years (24 consecutive months) from the date of issuance; this time frame is referred to as the "Provisional Certification Period."
4. Once an individual obtains the PCCSS credential, he/she progresses (upgrades) to full certification as a CCSS by successfully completing the upgrade requirements.

B. **Certified Community Support Specialist (CCSS)**

1. The Certified Community Support Specialist (CCSS) credential is full certification. *(This credential was formerly known as "Certified Case Management Professional - CCMP" and "Certified Case Management Professional I - CCMP-I").*

2. Full certification (CCSS) is renewable every four years, as long as renewal requirements are met.
3. Individuals initially meeting the requirements for CCSS, as outlined in Chapter Three, should apply directly for this level of credential, thereby skipping provisional certification. Otherwise, an individual applies for PCCSS and then later, once upgrade requirements are met, applies for CCSS.

C. **Certified Community Support Specialist II (CCSS-II)**

1. The Certified Community Support Specialist II (CCSS-II) credential is full certification. *(This credential was formerly known as "Certified Case Management Professional II - CCMP-II").*
2. This level of credentialing was discontinued effective January 2009; it is no longer available to new applicants.
3. Individuals who obtained the CCSS-II credential prior to discontinuance may continue to renew it as long as renewal requirements are met.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.5 Professional Titles

Recognized professional titles within the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program are:

A. DMH "Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist" or the abbreviation "PCCSS" *(formerly "Provisionally Certified Case Management Professional – PCCMP");*

B. DMH "Certified Community Support Specialist" or the abbreviation "CCSS" *(formerly "Certified Case Management Professional - CCMP" and "Certified Case Management Professional I – CCMP-I")*; and,

C. DMH "Certified Community Support Specialist II" or the abbreviation "CCSS-II" *(formerly "Certified Case Management Professional II - CCMP-II"); (no longer offered to new applicants).*

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.6 State Mental Health System

A. **DMH professional credentials are valid only in Mississippi's "state mental health system."**

B. For the purposes of DMH professional credentialing, the "state mental health system" is defined as programs which are certified, funded and/or operated/administered by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health *(and also as outlined and defined in Section 41-4-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated).*

C. **Only individuals currently employed in the "state mental health system," as defined in this document (above), are eligible to apply for and hold a DMH professional credential.**

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.7 Updates

A. This document is updated and revised periodically. The applicant/DMH-credentialed individual (or other interested person) is responsible for ensuring that he/she has the most current version of this document.

B. Affected persons must comply with, and are responsible for, provisions contained in the most current version, including utilization of current application and related forms.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.8 Nondiscrimination and Americans with Disabilities Act

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health does not discriminate because of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation. The Department of Mental Health promotes nondiscriminatory practices and procedures in all phases of state service administration, as well as in programs funded and/or certified/operated by the Department of Mental Health.

B. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health complies with all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If requested, special accommodations to aid in the completion of forms or related credentialing matters will be provided.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.9 Application Booklets

A. This document and the corresponding application forms are available online. Interested individuals should download a copy from the agency (DMH) website.

B. Individuals who need a print copy should contact the Division of PLACE.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.10 Application Time Limits

A. Initial applications will remain open for two years from date of receipt. During that time, applicants have the opportunity to rectify any deficiencies.

B. Following two years from the date of receipt, incomplete applications (*initial and upgrade)*, applications containing unresolved deficiencies *(initial and upgrade)*, and applications which did not result in a credential being awarded (*initial and upgrade)* will no longer be maintained by the Division. Additional timelines relating to upgrade and renewal applications are covered more fully in the relevant sections of this document.

C. Applicants should make copies of all application forms (except the sealed materials) before submitting the application. DMH will not return forms to applicants or anyone else once the application has been submitted.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.11 Jurisdictional Limitations

A. This program is limited to the issuance of professional credentialing through the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program.

B. Actions of the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification, the Professional Licensure and Certification Review Board, the Department of Mental Health and the State Board of Mental Health should not in any way be construed as a recommendation for or against personnel action.

C. It is not the intent of DMH to monitor members of other appropriately-regulated professional credentials in Mississippi. No provisions in these standards and requirements should be construed as overlapping or interfering with the jurisdiction of other appropriately-regulated professional credentials.

D. Holding a DMH professional credential does not exempt an individual from any other professional certification/licensure required by state law.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.12 Final Interpretation

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health is responsible for the final interpretation of all matters pertaining to DMH professional credentialing, including (but not limited to) all provisions contained within this document. This interpretation will be considered binding on all applicants and DMH-credentialed individuals (unless otherwise preempted by the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health).

B. Any provisions or situations not expressly covered in this document will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of DMH, the Division of PLACE, the PLACE Review Board and, as appropriate, the State Board of Mental Health.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 2: Organization

Rule 2.1 Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE)

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) is responsible for the development and implementation of DMH professional credentialing programs.

B. Major duties of the Division include (but are not limited to):

1. Promulgates standards and requirements pertaining to DMH professional credentialing;
2. Administers DMH professional credentialing programs;
3. Processes applications for DMH professional credentialing and related forms, paperwork and fees;
4. Assists the public with information pertaining to DMH professional credentialing;
5. Maintains a registry of individuals holding a DMH professional credential and provides verification of DMH professional credentials, as appropriate;
6. Regulates the use of DMH professional credentialing titles; and,
7. Facilitates Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board meetings and related matters.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 2.2 PLACE Review Board

A. The PLACE Review Board's composition and appointment structure is as follows:

1. The Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board is comprised of seven members.
2. The term of office is five years; Review Board members may hold consecutive terms.
3. Appointments are made by the DMH Executive Director. Attempts are made to ensure adequate representation among disciplines and programmatic types.
4. Review Board members must hold a DMH professional credential in good standing, and at least one Review Board member must also be a DMH Central Office staff representative.
5. A Chairperson is chosen by the Review Board from among its members. The Chairperson's term of office is one year. Other Review Board member functions and responsibilities may be assigned by the Review Board or Division, as needed.

B. The PLACE Review Board's purpose and powers are as follows:

1. The Review Board reviews applications for DMH professional credentialing and makes recommendations to the DMH Executive Director regarding the awarding of certification.

2. The Review Board has the authority to deny applications for DMH professional credentialing; hold applications pending the submission of additional information; investigate complaints; conduct disciplinary hearings; and impose sanctions, if necessary.
3. In conjunction with the Division of PLACE, the Review Board receives and renders decisions regarding special requests pertaining to DMH professional credentialing. The Review Board may stipulate that special request claims be notarized and require supporting evidence to substantiate the request.
4. Review Board decisions regarding either the denial of professional certification/licensure or disciplinary action may be appealed.
5. The Review Board assists the Division of PLACE in developing applicable DMH professional credentialing standards and requirements and engages in continued study of best practices pertaining to DMH professional credentialing with a view of improving standards as needed.
6. The Review Board will exercise such powers pertaining to DMH professional credentialing, as provided for in this document.
7. The Review Board, in conjunction with the Division of PLACE, may periodically develop and promulgate additional professional standards and requirements and administrative policies and procedures (to work in concert with this document) as it deems necessary for the execution and enforcement of applicable state law and this *Standards & Requirements* document.
8. Review Board members are individually exempt from civil liability as a result of any action taken by the Review Board.
9. General submissions/requests to the Review Board should be submitted to the PLACE Review Board in writing c/o the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, Division of PLACE (or via email to the Division of PLACE).

C. The PLACE Review Board meetings shall be conducted in the following manner:

1. Review Board meetings are held at least quarterly at a time and place determined by the Review Board, and at such other times as requested by the Division. Meetings may be called by the Division or Chairperson with 10 days advance notice. The 10-day notice requirement may be waived by agreement of a majority of the Review Board.
2. Meeting quorum is a majority of the Review Board members present. If quorum is not present, the meeting will be adjourned until a date designated by the Chairperson or Division of PLACE staff.
3. The Review Board only reviews complete applications.
4. A Review Board meeting calendar, along with corresponding application deadlines, will be posted on the agency (DMH) website and will be provided to state mental health system program Staff Development Officers (SDOs) on an annual basis.
5. The Division reserves the right to cancel or reschedule Review Board meetings without prior notice.

D. PLACE Review Board members may be removed from office for the following reasons:

1. A Review Board member may be removed from office if found to be in violation of any of the standards contained in this document.
2. A Review Board member may be removed from office if his/her certification or licensure is no longer in good standing.
3. A Review Board member must be disqualified from any business on which he/she may not make an objective evaluation or decision.
4. A Review Board member subject to disciplinary action, as defined in this document, must disqualify himself/herself from any business until the complaint is resolved.
5. Action by either the DMH Executive Director or a majority of the Review Board members, with Executive Director approval, is necessary to remove a Review Board member from office.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 2.3 DMH Executive Director

A. The DMH Executive Director, or designee, reviews and approves/disapproves Review Board recommendations to award DMH professional credentials to individual applicants.

B. The DMH Executive Director, or designee, reviews and makes decisions regarding Review Board actions relating to the denial of a DMH professional credential (if appealed by the applicant/credentialed individual) and/or the imposition of sanctions (if appealed by the credentialed individual).

C. The DMH Executive Director, or designee, reserves the right to amend or repeal any standard or requirement contained in this document (or adopt a new standard or requirement), with appropriate prior notice. In this event, the DMH Division of PLACE will send notification of the directed change(s) to the last known address of each registered DMH-credentialed individual. The promulgated change(s) will be effective whether received by the person entitled to notice or not. Notice will also be given to state mental health system program directors or staff development officers. Change(s) made under this provision will be incorporated into the existing *Standards & Requirements* document in a timely manner.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 2.4 State Board of Mental Health

A. During the administrative appeal process, an applicant/credentialed individual may appeal the decision of the DMH Executive Director to the State Board of Mental Health.

B. During the disciplinary appeal process, a credentialed individual may appeal the decision of the DMH Executive Director to the State Board of Mental Health.

C. The State Board of Mental Health, as the authorized entity under applicable state law to promulgate state mental health system credentialing programs, reserves the right to amend or repeal any standard or requirement contained within this document (or adopt a new standard or requirement) without prior notice. In this event, the DMH Division of PLACE will send notification of the directed change(s) to the last known address of each registered DMH-credentialed individual. The promulgated change(s) will be effective whether received by the person entitled to notification or not. Notice will also be given to state mental health system program directors or staff development officers. Change(s) made under this provision will be incorporated into the existing *Standards & Requirements* document in a timely manner.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 3: Certification Requirements

Rule 3.1 Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist Requirements - PCCSS

A. In order to be eligible to apply for the **DMH Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist** credential **(PCCSS)**, **an individual must meet ALL of the requirements listed below**:

1. Employment Requirement;
2. Education Requirement;
3. Ethics Requirement; AND,
4. Criminal Background Checks Requirement.

B. The Employment, Education, Ethics and Criminal Background Checks requirements are outlined in the "Certification Requirements - Categories and Descriptions" section of this chapter.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 3.2 PCCSS Upgrade Requirements

A. Once an individual is awarded the DMH Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist credential (PCCSS), he/she must complete the following two (2) requirements in order to upgrade to full certification as a CCSS:

1. Experience Requirement; AND,
2. Exam/Training Requirement.

B. The Experience and Exam/Training requirements are outlined in the "Certification Requirements - Categories and Descriptions" section of this chapter.

C. **A PCCSS must complete these upgrade requirements by the end of his/her two-year Provisional Certification Period.** PCCSS upgrade timelines are covered in Chapter Six.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

***Rule 3.3 Certified Community Support Specialist Requirements* - CCSS**

A. Individuals eligible to apply for the **DMH Certified Community Support Specialist** credential **(CCSS)** are as follows:

1. PCCSSs who have successfully completed all upgrade requirements listed above by the end of their two-year Provisional Certification Period may apply to upgrade to full certification (CCSS) on or before their prescribed deadline, as outlined in Chapter Six. *(This is considered an upgrade application for CCSS.)*

2. Individuals initially meeting the requirements for CCSS, as outlined in this chapter, should apply directly for this level of credential, thereby skipping provisional certification (PCCSS). *(This is considered an initial application for CCSS.)* Otherwise, an individual applies for PCCSS and then later, once upgrade requirements are met, applies for CCSS.

B. In order to be eligible to apply for the **DMH Certified Community Support Specialist** credential **(CCSS)**, **an individual must meet ALL of the requirements listed below**:

1. Employment Requirement;

2. Education Requirement;

3. Ethics Requirement;

4. Criminal Background Checks Requirement;

5. Experience Requirement; AND,

6. Exam/Training Requirement.

C. The Employment, Education, Ethics, Criminal Background Checks, Experience and Exam/Training requirements are outlined in the "Certification Requirements - Categories and Descriptions" section of this chapter.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 3.4 Certification Requirements – Categories and Descriptions

A. **Employment Requirement**

1. The applicant must be currently employed at a Mississippi "state mental health system" program, as defined in Chapter One.

2. Initial applicants must have responsibility for providing (or supervising) community support or Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) Waiver support coordination services. *Upgrade applicants are exempt from this specific employment requirement.*

3. Employment refers to paid, not volunteer, work.

B. **Education Requirement**

1. The applicant must have at least a Bachelor's degree in a mental health-, intellectual/developmental disabilities- or human services/behavioral health-related field. *(If submitting a Master's degree or higher, the relevant degree must be comprised of a minimum of 30 semester hours or its equivalent.)* The degree must be from an approved educational institution (as determined by DMH).

2. The following are examples of degree types which may be considered appropriate for the DMH Community Support Specialist credential; this is not an exhaustive list:

    a. Counseling/Guidance,
    b. Social Work,
    c. Education,
    d. Special Education,
    e. Psychology,
    f. Family and Consumer Studies,
    g. Child and Family Studies,
    h. Recreation/Leisure Studies,
    i. Nursing,
    j. Marriage and Family Studies,
    k. Rehabilitative Services/Vocational Rehabilitation,
    l. Human Developmental Psychology,
    m. Gerontology,
    n. Early Childhood Development,
    o. Sociology,
    p. Criminal Justice, and
    q. Other mental health-, behavioral health-, and/or intellectual disability-related degree types, as determined by the PLACE Review Board.

3. **For applicants with atypical degrees:** If the applicant's Bachelor's degree type is not listed above, successful completion of at least five (5) courses from the following areas will be considered:

    a. psychology,
    b. early childhood development,
    c. chemical dependency studies,
    d. sociology,
    e. abnormal psychology,
    f. gerontology,
    g. developmental psychology,
    h. communications,
    i. child and/or adolescent psychology,
    j. social welfare,
    k. human growth and development,
    l. human behavior,
    m. professional ethics,
    n. cultural sensitivity and/or,
    o. other mental health-, behavioral health-, and/or intellectual disability-related courses, as determined by the PLACE Review Board.

        i. All or part of these courses may either be completed as part of the degree program of study or completed outside of (as add-on courses to) the degree program of study (i.e., without earning an additional degree). **The requirement to hold a Bachelor's degree is not waived.** Courses under this provision must be at least three (3) semester hours or the equivalent and must have been successfully completed (i.e., a passing score was earned).

        ii. Courses completed by applicants which are not part of the degree program of study will be evaluated during application review to determine applicability; only degrees/courses completed at an approved educational institution (as determined by DMH) are considered.

4. Evidence of successful degree/course completion will be designated on the official submitted transcript(s), as part of the application packet. The PLACE Review Board may also request course catalog descriptions or other documentation to verify successful course completion and/or that the education requirement has been met.

5. PCCSSs who are applying to upgrade to CCSS would have already met the above-listed education requirement (and produced the required verification of such) at the time of provisional application. Therefore, an applicant who is applying to upgrade from PCCSS to CCSS does not need to submit a new official transcript with his/her upgrade application packet. However, an applicant who is applying directly for

CCSS, (skipping PCCSS), must submit an official transcript as part of the application process.

C. **Experience Requirement**

1. The experience requirement is **only applicable to individuals applying for full certification - CCSS.**

2. There is **no work experience requirement** to apply for **provisional** certification.

3. **For individuals applying for full certification (CCSS),** a minimum of one full year (12 months or its full-time equivalent) of supervised community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination experience at a Mississippi state mental health system program is required. This experience may either be the provision or supervision of community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination services.

4. The experience requirement is based on a full-time 40-hour work week; individuals with part-time experience must report an amount of experience which is equivalent to a 40-hour work week; the Review Board will make decisions regarding part-time work on a case-by-case basis.

5. Employment refers to paid, not volunteer work.

6. The designated state mental health system program Director of Community Support Services or Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination *(as appropriate)*, as defined in the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers (DMH Operational Standards)*, must verify the submitted work experience.

7. *A state mental health system program executive director may contact the Division to make a request to designate an additional master's level program employee to verify the required community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination experience in the event that either the Director of Community Support Services or the Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination is not available. The designee must possess educational, experience and credentialing qualifications commensurate with the qualifications for Directors of Community Support Services and Directors of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination, as outlined in the DMH Operational Standards. A request of this nature is subject to Division and/or Review Board approval.*

8. All submitted work experience must be submitted on the appropriate form prescribed by the Division as part of the application packet.

D. **Exam/Training Requirement**

1. **This requirement is only applicable to individuals applying for full certification - CCSS.**

2. There are two (2) options to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement for full certification; **the individual must have completed only ONE of these two options:**

    a. **Option One - Web-based Training Component:**

        i. Successful completion of a web-based training component, specific to either community support service provision or ID/DD Waiver support coordination service provision, as appropriate for the population served, as prescribed by DMH. *Individuals completing the web-based training component should access the correct course list for their discipline (community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination).*

        ii. The web-based training component is a customized collection of e-learning courses (and corresponding exams) designed to address basic knowledge and practical information pertinent to community support specialists *(and ID/DD Waiver support coordinators)* in the state mental heath system. DMH establishes the specific content.

        iii. Course selections are subject to periodic update without prior notice.

        iv. At the time of provisional certification award, individuals will receive general information on the web-based training component as well as registration information. Web-based training component information will also be maintained on the agency (DMH) website.

        v. Applicants may complete the web-based training component prior to initial application as long as: 1) the correct courses, as prescribed by DMH, are taken (courses are subject to change without prior notice); 2) all courses are successfully completed; 3) the appropriate documentation, as prescribed by the Division, is submitted with the initial application to illustrate successful completion; and, 4) the courses were completed within two (2) years from the date of receipt of the initial application, as determined by the Division's records.

        vi. Participants will comply with the rules of the web-based training process, as prescribed by the web-based training administrator.

        vii. DMH may prescribe appropriate, non-excessive fees for the web-based training to cover administrative costs; these fees are subject to change.

        viii. Proficiency for successful completion will be 80% for each individual exam in the customized collection of courses *(and/or as established by the web-based training administrator); as web-based training updates occur, the designated proficiency level, as prescribed by the web-based training administrator, may be subject to change.*

ix. Individuals who complete the web-based training component through a venue other than DMH may be able to count it to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement as long as: 1) the correct courses, as prescribed by DMH, are taken (courses are subject to change without prior notice); 2) all courses are successfully completed; 3) the appropriate documentation, as prescribed by the Division, is submitted to illustrate successful completion; and, 4), the courses were completed within the appropriate time frame as prescribed by DMH; this situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis and is subject to Review Board approval.

x. Each individual completing the web-based training component, whether through DMH or an outside venue, will be required to submit documentation attesting to the fact that the entire web-based training component was completed by him/her. This documentation must illustrate successful completion of the entire web-based training component AND must be submitted in the appropriate format prescribed by the Division as part of the CCSS application packet.

b. **Option Two - DMH Case Management Orientation:**

i. Successful completion of DMH Case Management Orientation, a training and exam previously offered through DMH. Individuals who successfully completed DMH Case Management Orientation prior to its discontinuance may count it to fulfill the Exam/Training requirement.

ii. Individuals utilizing this option must provide acceptable documentation to show proof of successful completion. It is the individual's responsibility to provide this proof at the time of CCSS application.

3. Any individual who completes the exam/training component in a fraudulent manner will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including loss of any DMH professional credential held and/or rejection of application for DMH professional credentialing.

E. **Ethics Requirement**

1. All applicants must read and abide by the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct* located in Chapter Nine.

2. It is the applicant's responsibility to read these principles before signing and submitting the application. The applicant should keep a reference copy.

3. Applicants must inform the Division of PLACE of any previous or pending disciplinary action against them by any professional credentialing body or association. Applicants who have had any past or currently held DMH professional

credential or any other professional credential be the subject of any disciplinary action must notify the Division of PLACE during the application process. At a minimum, this notification must be provided in the appropriate space on the application form. DMH may delay action on the application until the matter has been resolved and verified to the satisfaction of DMH and/or the PLACE Review Board.

F. **Criminal Background Checks**

1. As part of the application process, the Division of PLACE ensures that state mental health system employers have conducted fingerprinting and criminal records background checks on individuals applying for DMH professional credentials.

2. No one will be credentialed without proof of criminal background checks.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 4: Application Procedures

Rule 4.1 PCCSS (Provisional Certification) Application Packet

To apply for **temporary certification as a PCCSS**, an individual should submit an **application packet** which contains the following:

A. PCCSS Application Form;

B. PCCSS Verification of Employment Form;

C. Official Transcript; and,

D. Application Fee - $30.00 fee, payable by check or money order to the "Mississippi Department of Mental Health."

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 4.2 CCSS (Full Certification) Application Packet

To apply for **full certification as a CCSS**, an individual should submit an **application packet** *(initial or upgrade)* which, **at a minimum**, contains the following:

A. CCSS Application Form;

B. CCSS Verification of Employment Form;

C. CCSS Verification of Work Experience Form; and,

D. Either the Web-based Training Record **OR** the DMH Case Management Orientation Certificate/Record (as applicable).

1. *Exam/Training Option One – Web-based Training Component:* A CCSS applicant who completed the web-based training component to satisfy the Exam/Training Requirement for CCSS must include a signed copy of his/her web-based training learner transcript in the CCSS application packet.

    a. The learner transcript, containing the CCSS applicant's original signature, must be signed in **blue** ink, attesting to the fact that the entire web-based training component was completed by the applicant. The learner transcript must be submitted in the appropriate format, as prescribed by the Division.

    b. The submitted learner transcript must contain the course names and corresponding dates of completion for each course in the web-based training component, as well as the total number of course hours completed.

    c. This documentation must be submitted whether the web-based training was completed through DMH or through an outside venue. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

2. *Exam/Training Option Two – DMH Case Management Orientation:* If the CCSS applicant is utilizing DMH Case Management Orientation to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement, a copy of the certificate/record documenting successful completion must be included in the CCSS application packet. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

E. **If the CCSS applicant is submitting an initial (not upgrade) application,** the following **additional** CCSS application component(s) are also required:

1. Official Transcript – *(If upgrading from PCCSS, no additional transcript is required.)*
2. Application Fee - $30.00 fee, payable by check or money order to the "Mississippi Department of Mental Health." *(If upgrading from PCCSS, no application fee is required.)* Only individuals applying directly for CCSS pay the application fee. **This is a ONE TIME fee; applicants should not pay the application fee twice**.

F. **Application Forms are located online at the agency (DMH) website, as an addendum to this document.** *Individuals needing a print copy should contact the Division.*

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 4.3 General Application Guidelines

A. **General Directions**

1. Applicants should read all directions and application materials before beginning the application process. Each application form has specific directions which must be followed.

2. Certain application forms must bear original signatures, as indicated on the form. Copies or faxes are not accepted.

3. With the exception of the official transcript, all application materials must be submitted together in one application packet.

4. The official transcript must be submitted in a sealed college/university envelope. If, however, the applicant chooses to submit his/her official transcript(s) in an electronic format, it is the applicant's responsibility to have the college/university submit, along with the electronic transcript, sufficient documentation to verify that the electronic transcript is an official copy; accordingly, such documentation will be subject to Division of PLACE and PLACE Review Board approval.

5. The responsibility for official transcript submission is the applicant's. The Division of PLACE does not communicate with the college/university on the applicant's behalf.

6. The submitted official transcript(s) must document that the education requirement has been met.

7. The official transcript must document that the required degree has been awarded or conferred, including the date of degree award. Letters from the college/university indicating that an individual has met the requirements to complete a degree are not acceptable.

8. The official transcript can either be included in the application packet or sent to the DMH Division of PLACE directly from the college/university. This is the only application piece which may be submitted separately.

9. All submission deadlines reflect the date received by the DMH Division of PLACE, not postmarked dates.

10. The PLACE Review Board only considers complete applications; all application deficiencies must be resolved. Each scheduled Review Board meeting has a corresponding deadline date by which complete application materials must be received. Review Board meetings may be cancelled without prior notice.

11. Only forms prescribed by the Division of PLACE may be utilized to apply for certification.

12. Application forms may be changed without prior notice. The most current version should be utilized.

13. Once submitted, all application materials become the property of DMH. Application materials will not be returned; the applicant should keep a copy of the application materials, except those under seal. Superfluous or unnecessary application materials will be destroyed.

B. **Application Time Limits**

1. Initial applications will remain open for two years from date of receipt. During that time, applicants have the opportunity to rectify any deficiencies.

2. Following two years from the date of receipt, incomplete applications *(initial and upgrade)*, applications containing unresolved deficiencies *(initial and upgrade)*, and applications which did not result in a credential being awarded *(initial and upgrade)* will no longer be maintained by the Division.

3. Additional timelines pertaining to upgrade and renewal applications are covered more fully in the relevant sections of this document.

4. When a PCCSS needs to upgrade to full certification, he/she must submit a new application for CCSS; no new application fee is required.

5. The upgrade application may be submitted as soon as the PCCSS meets the requirements to upgrade, but the absolute deadline to submit an upgrade application is the last working day of the month following the PCCSS's expiration date. (The PCCSS expiration date is located on the PCCSS's initial credential award letter and on the PCCSS's issued certificate.) For example, if a PCCSS credential expires in October of a given year, the CCSS upgrade application must be received by the Division by the last working day of November of that same year.

6. If a PCCSS has not met the requirements to upgrade and wants to continue in the program, he/she must submit an extension request to the PLACE Review Board by the same time frame as the upgrade application would be due. Extension approval is at the discretion of the Review Board. Additional information on extensions, including how to request an extension, is covered in Chapter Nine.

7. Failure to submit the upgrade application (or an extension request) by the prescribed deadline results in automatic default from the program. PCCSSs are expected to keep track of the date by which they must upgrade.

8. Incomplete portions/problems associated with the submitted upgrade application should be resolved as soon as possible but no later than 45 calendar days from the PCCSS's prescribed upgrade application deadline, as outlined above. If all upgrade application deficiencies are not resolved within this time frame, the individual's provisional credential will automatically default effective per his/her provisional expiration date. (Additional information pertaining to PCCSS Upgrade Timelines is covered in Chapter Six.)

C. **Official Transcript**

1. Only official transcript(s) which show that the education requirement has been met are necessary.

2. All references to college credit hours are for semester hours. Quarter hours submitted will be converted to semester hours using the standard formula (Number of Quarter Hours X .66 = Semester Hour Equivalent).

3. All references to graduate degrees require at least 30 semester hours (or equivalent).

4. Degrees/coursework must be completed at an approved educational institution.

5. Official transcripts submitted to show proof of degree completion must illustrate that the degree has been awarded/conferred.

6. If the applicant holds another DMH professional credential and has already submitted an official transcript to the DMH Division of PLACE which would illustrate that the education requirement has been met, he/she should note this information on the application form. As long as the Division of PLACE still has this information on file, a new transcript is not necessary.

7. An applicant who is applying to upgrade from PCCSS to CCSS does not need to submit a new copy of the official transcript with his/her upgrade application packet. However, an applicant who is applying directly for CCSS (skipping PCCSS) must submit an official relevant transcript as part of the application process.

D. **Verification of Employment/Criminal Background Checks**

1. The required form to verify an applicant's state mental health system employment includes a Background Check section. Personnel Officers must indicate whether or not criminal background checks (to include fingerprinting) have been conducted for each applicant, as appropriate to the applicant's position and professional responsibilities.

2. The form will not be accepted unless the Background Check section is satisfactorily completed – no exceptions.

3. With specific areas of interest being conviction of a crime or conviction of a felony relating to the abuse or mistreatment of other individuals, the verification of background checks (to include fingerprinting) should include: Convictions under the Vulnerable Adults Act; Child Abuse Registry; Sex Offense Record; Criminal Record; Motor Vehicle Registry; and, others, as appropriate to the applicant's position and professional responsibilities.

4. The Verification of Employment Form must clearly show that the individual is currently employed at a Mississippi state mental health system program. If an applicant is unsure if he/she works at a program meeting the "state mental health system" definition, as outlined in this document, he/she should consult with the program's personnel office.

E. **Verification of Work Experience**

1. PCCSS applications do not include documentation of completed work experience.

2. CCSS applicants must document appropriate work experience.

3. The prescribed form must be completed by the designated state mental health system Director of Community Support Services or Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination, as appropriate. A record of each designated "Director of Community Support Services" and "Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination" is maintained by the Division of PLACE. *At his/her discretion, the state mental health system program executive director may contact the DMH Division of PLACE and make a request to designate an additional master's level program employee to verify the required experience, in the event that the Director of Community Support Services or the Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination is not available.*

4. A Director of Community Support Services *(or Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination)* is not permitted to complete his/her own Verification of Experience Form. In this instance, the program executive director (or other master's level program employee designated by the program executive director *(and approved by the DMH Division of PLACE)* to verify community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination experience) may verify the work experience.

5. A qualified supervisor should not be a member of the individual's immediate family.

6. CCSSs only need to report one year of full-time relevant work experience; a lifetime of work experience is not necessary.

7. Volunteer work does not count.

8. If relevant work experience is accrued under more than one supervisor, a separate Verification of Experience Form must be submitted for each position.

9. Due to the confidential nature of the submitted Verification of Experience Form, information completed by the supervisor will not be shared with the applicant – no exceptions.

F. **Verification of Exam/Training Requirement**

1. *Exam/Training Option One – Web-based Training Component:* A CCSS applicant who completed the web-based training component to satisfy the Exam/Training Requirement for CCSS must include a signed copy of his/her web-based training learner transcript in the CCSS application packet.

    a. The learner transcript, containing the CCSS applicant's original signature, must be signed in **blue** ink, attesting to the fact that the entire web-based training component was completed by the applicant. The learner transcript must be submitted in the appropriate format, as prescribed by the Division.

    b. The submitted learner transcript must contain the course names and corresponding dates of completion for each course in the web-based training component, as well as the total number of course hours completed.

    c. This documentation must be submitted whether the web-based training was completed through DMH or through an outside venue. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

2. *Exam/Training Option Two – DMH Case Management Orientation:* If the CCSS applicant is utilizing DMH Case Management Orientation to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement, a copy of the certificate/record documenting successful completion must be included in the CCSS application packet. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 5: Certification Phases

Rule 5.1 Application Phase

A. The steps to the application phase are as follows:

1. Individual submits a complete application packet.

2. The Division of PLACE reviews application packets for completeness.

3. Within prescribed timelines, applicants are given an opportunity to correct any application problem(s).

4. As a courtesy, the Division may notify applicants and/or their program Staff Development Officers (SDOs) of application problems/deficiencies; while such courtesy notification may be made, the Division does not guarantee such notification. Rather, it is the applicant's responsibility to submit a complete application and to keep track of and address any application deficiencies/problems.

5. Complete applications are forwarded to the PLACE Review Board. An application is considered to be complete when all required application forms and materials, including the relevant official transcript(s) and the required application fee, have been received by the DMH Division of PLACE in the proper format; the application must contain no deficiencies.

6. The Review Board reviews all applications, evaluates materials against established criteria and makes recommendations to the DMH Executive Director. Applicants are notified in writing if more information is needed.

7. Each regularly-scheduled PLACE Review Board meeting has a corresponding deadline for receipt of complete application materials.

8. Review Board meetings may be cancelled without prior notice.

9. A Review Board meeting calendar will be posted on the agency (DMH) website and provided to state mental health system program Staff Development Officers (SDOs) on an annual basis.

10. The Executive Director reviews the PLACE Review Board recommendations and approves or disapproves each application for professional credentialing.

B. Each applicant is subsequently notified in writing of the status of his/her application. The possible outcomes are:

1. *Approval* - Individual is awarded the credential.
2. *Hold Pending* - The Review Board may request additional information from the applicant before rendering a decision/recommendation.
3. *Denial* - The Review Board may deny initial, upgrade, or renewal applications for credentialing for the following reasons, including, but not limited to: failure to meet credentialing requirements; failure to meet prescribed credentialing timelines; lack of appropriate employment; failure to pay required fees; lack of appropriate educational degrees/coursework; lack of appropriate experience; failure to complete successfully upgrade requirements; failure to acquire necessary continuing education hours; unacceptable practice of the applicant; violation of these standards and requirements and/or any rules or regulations established by DMH and/or the PLACE Review Board; violation of the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct*; conviction of a crime which is a felony under federal or state law; and/or, declaration of mental incompetence by the court. Previous or pending revocation or disciplinary

action by any professional credentialing body may also result in delay or denial of application for DMH professional credentialing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

5.2 Certification Phase

A. **Provisional Certification (PCCSS)**

1. Once credentialed, the PCCSS will receive a credential award letter, followed by a temporary, provisional certificate. The credential award letter will outline:

    a. The length of Provisional Certification, including the PCCSS expiration date; Provisional certification is not renewable.
    b. The requirements the PCCSS must complete in order to upgrade to full certification; these requirements are outlined in Chapter Three.

2. Individuals who have been awarded provisional certification are expected to abide by the professional responsibility provisions in Chapter Nine.

B. **Full Certification (CCSS)**

1. Once credentialed, the CCSS will receive a credential award letter, followed by a full certificate. The credential award letter will outline:

    a. The length of certification, including the CCSS expiration date; the CCSS's expiration date is made to coincide with the DMH Community Support Specialist four-year renewal deadline. CCSSs renew every four years by the renewal deadline. Full certification timelines are addressed in Chapter Six.
    b. The CCSS renewal requirements; renewal requirements are outlined in Chapter Seven.

2. Individuals who have been awarded full certification are expected to abide by the professional responsibility provisions in Chapter Nine.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 5.3 Certificate Issuance

A. **Professional Identification**

1. Individuals who make successful application for provisional certification will be awarded a time-limited, provisional certificate attesting to the title of "Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist" (PCCSS).

2. Individuals who make successful application for certification will be awarded a full certificate attesting to the title of "Certified Community Support Specialist" (CCSS). CCSS is renewable every four years.

B. **Date of Issuance**

1. The credential date of issuance for **initial** applications will be the applicant's date of hire, as reported by the state mental health system employer on DMH-prescribed application forms. *(The employer must only report a single date of hire.)* In order to receive this date of issuance, the initial application must be **received** by the DMH Division of PLACE **within 30 calendar days of the reported date of hire, and the application must be complete.** *(The employer-reported date of hire will be counted as Day One.)*

2. "Initial application," as referenced in this document, refers to provisional applications and applications submitted directly for full certification (thereby bypassing provisional certification), not upgrade applications.

3. Any applicant whose **complete** initial application is not received by the DMH Division of PLACE within the 30-day time frame referenced above will receive as the credential date of issuance the PLACE Review Board meeting date at which the initial application was recommended for approval.

4. All **upgrade** applicants (i.e., provisionally-certified individuals applying for upgrade to full certification) will have as their credential date of issuance the PLACE Review Board meeting date at which the upgrade application was recommended for approval.

5. Provisional certification period extensions will not automatically be granted due to variations in dates of issuance.

C. **Certificates**

1. Wall certificates issued by the DMH remain the property of DMH and must be surrendered upon request.

2. DMH intends that each individual hold only one certificate per professional title. DMH does not provide multiple original wall certificates.

3. Certificates issued by the DMH reflecting credentialing as a PCCSS are valid for up to a maximum two-year (24 consecutive months) Provisional Certification Period. The issuance and expiration dates are printed on the certificate. **Dates of provisional issuance and expiration vary from person to person.**

4. An individual's provisional certificate automatically becomes invalid once he/she has successfully upgraded to full certification; the individual will receive a new certificate as a CCSS.

5. Certificates issued by DMH reflecting credentialing as a CCSS are valid for a maximum four–year Certification Period established by the Division. The issuance date is indicated on the certificate. Full certification timelines are addressed in Chapter Six. Full certificates are renewable.

6. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential who are currently practicing in the state mental health system should maintain a copy of proof of certification in their personnel file.

7. Upon separation from state mental health system employment, the credentialed individual should notify the Division accordingly, as outlined in Chapter Nine. Unless the separating individual is reemployed with another state mental health system program or requests and receives an appropriate credential status change, the certificate is invalid.

D. **Replacement Certificates**

1. Only individuals in good standing who are currently employed in the state mental health system (or in Inactive Status) may request a replacement certificate.

2. Upon written (or email) request, an individual may be allowed one replacement certificate at no charge for any of the following reasons:

    a. Printing Error;
    b. Damaged/Destroyed;
    c. Lost;
    d. Never received; or,
    e. Legal Name Change.
        i. If the request is due to a legal name change, along with the request, the individual should submit a copy of legal documentation of the name change. The request should indicate the new name as it should appear on the replacement certificate.
        ii. Name changes reported at the time of an upgrade application do not have to be accompanied by a request or a copy of the legal documentation; this exemption does not apply to renewal applications.

3. If an individual makes more than one request for a replacement certificate, the Division reserves the right to impose the certificate replacement fee.

4. Once the new replacement certificate is issued, the previous certificate immediately becomes invalid. Possession and utilization of two certificates for fraudulent purposes is grounds for disciplinary action, including possible loss of credentialing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 5.4 Administrative Appeal

A. The terms of administrative appeal are only applicable to the application process.

B. An applicant aggrieved by a decision regarding the initial, upgrade or renewal application for professional credentialing has the right to appeal to the DMH Executive Director.

C. The applicant must notify the Division and submit the written notice of appeal (along with any supplemental application information) within 30 calendar days of the mailing of the application review results.

D. The DMH Executive Director will review the application and supplemental information, if provided, and notify the applicant of the results of this review within 30 days.

E. An applicant aggrieved by the DMH Executive Director's final decision may then appeal to the State Board of Mental Health. Appeals to the State Board of Mental Health must be made within 30 calendar days of the mailing of the DMH Executive Director's final decision. The appeal must be made and conducted in accordance with established Board policy.

F. All submitted appeals must be clearly marked "Notice of Appeal" in bold-faced type, specifically stating that the notice is an appeal.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 6: Certification Timelines

Rule 6.1 PCCSS Certification – Upgrade Information and Timelines

A. The PCCSS credential is a temporary, nonrenewable certification. It is valid for up to two years or 24 consecutive months from the date of issuance. This two-year period is referred to as the PCCSS's "Provisional Certification Period."

B. The Provisional Certification Period begins on the day the PCCSS credential is issued and lasts for a maximum of up to two years or 24 consecutive months.

C. Once an individual is awarded the PCCSS credential, he/she will receive notification of the credentialing award, along with upgrade instructions. (*The upgrade instructions will include registration information for the web-based training component as covered in Chapter Three).*

D. By the end of the 24-month Provisional Certification Period, a PCCSS must complete ALL requirements to upgrade to full certification (CCSS). Upgrade Requirements are covered in Chapter Three.

E. It is the PCCSS's responsibility to complete all upgrade requirements.

F. PCCSSs who complete the upgrade requirements may upgrade to full certification (CCSS) **prior to** the end of the two-year Provisional Certification Period.

G. A PCCSS who does not complete all requirements to upgrade to full certification (CCSS) by the end of his/her PCCSS expiration date will default from the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program. Default means the credential is expired, and the individual no longer holds the credential.

H. In rare and extenuating circumstances, the PLACE Review Board may grant an extension of an individual's Provisional Certification Period. Information on extensions, including how to request an extension, is covered in Chapter Nine.

I. **Individuals upgrading from PCCSS to CCSS must submit an application for CCSS. Upgrade from PCCSS to CCSS is not an automatic process initiated by the Division of PLACE.**

J. **A PCCSS should submit a CCSS application packet as soon as all upgrade requirements are met, but no later than the last working day of the month following the PCCSS expiration date.** For example, if a PCCSS credential expires in October of a given year, the CCSS upgrade application must be received by the Division by the last working day of November of that same year.

K. The PCCSS expiration date is located on both the PCCSS award letter and the PCCSS original certificate. It is the PCCSS's responsibility to keep track of his/her PCCSS expiration date and corresponding CCSS upgrade application deadline.

L. The Division does not notify individuals when their PCCSS credential is expiring and the CCSS upgrade application is due.

M. Incomplete portions/problems associated with the submitted upgrade application should be resolved as soon as possible but no later than 45 calendar days from the PCCSS's prescribed upgrade application deadline, as outlined above. If all upgrade application deficiencies are not resolved within this time frame, the individual's provisional credential will automatically default effective per his/her provisional expiration date.

N. Unless an extension for more time has been granted, individuals who fail to submit a CCSS (upgrade) application within established timelines will be considered to have defaulted from the program, meaning their PCCSS credential is expired. **This will be an automatic action by the Division of PLACE; no default notification will be sent.**

O. Except in rare and extenuating circumstances, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Review Board, an individual may not hold provisional certification more than twice. *An exception to this rule may be when the individual's provisional certification expiration (default) occurred due to an individual's separation from state mental health system employment rather than a failure to meet upgrade requirements. The burden of proof falls on the PCCSS.*

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 6.2 CCSS – Certification Length and Timelines

A. The CCSS (and CCSS-II) credential is renewable, as long as renewal requirements are met.

B. The CCSS's certification begins on the day the certification is issued. This date is located on both the credential award letter and the original CCSS certificate.

C. CCSSs (and CCSS-IIs) are on a four-year certification cycle. Upon achieving full certification, a CCSS's expiration date is made to coincide with the DMH Community Support Specialist renewal deadline.

D. CCSSs (and CCSS-IIs) interested in maintaining the credential renew every four years by the renewal deadline.

E. Specific renewal information is covered in Chapter Seven.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 7: Renewal

Rule 7.1 Renewal General Information

A. Renewal is only applicable to individuals holding full certification (CCSSs and CCSS-IIs).

B. Provisionally-certified individuals (PCCSSs) **DO NOT** renew.

C. Individuals holding CCSS and CCSS-II are required to renew **every four (4) years** on a certification schedule established by the Division.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.2 Renewal Deadline

A. The renewal deadline is September 30th (or closest prior working day) of each four-year certification period.

B. Renewal deadlines will be every four years - September 30, 2015, September 30, 2019, etc. *(Prior to January 1, 2011, the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program was organized by two-year certification periods.)*

C. Qualified individuals will renew their credential on or before the established renewal deadline in order to maintain Current or Inactive Status.

D. Individuals who fail to renew by the established deadline will have their credential automatically changed to Lapsed Status. Lapsed Status means the credential is expired, and the individual no longer holds the credential.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.3 Renewal Requirements

A. **Employment Requirement**

1. Renewing individuals must either continue to be employed in the "state mental health system" or hold Inactive Status.

2. An individual who is no longer employed in the state mental health system at the time of renewal no longer meets the employment criteria for DMH professional credentialing. Unless the individual holds Inactive Status, he/she may make a request to change his/her certification status category. Certificate status information is located in Chapter Nine.

B. **Continuing Education (CE) Requirement**

1. **A minimum of 60 successfully completed continuing education (CE) hours** (15 hours per year) is required for renewal.

2. Continuing education hours or college course work counted for renewal must have been successfully completed **during the current four-year certification period**. Renewal periods run from October 1st to September 30th of the appropriate four-year cycle.

3. CEs earned outside of the current four-year certification period will not be counted; CEs may not be carried over from one renewal cycle to the next.

4. One continuing education hour is equal to 60 consecutive minutes in an appropriate CE activity.

5. At least 52 of the 60 required hours must be behavioral health-related; *(Individuals may count up to eight (8) of the 60 CE hours in non-behavioral health-related areas, such as technology or administrative types of training, which they or their programs deem important or necessary for continued professional enhancement.)*

6. Up to 15 of the required 60 hours may be obtained by presenting applicable (behavioral health-related) training events.

7. At least two (2) of the required CE hours must be in the area of cultural competency.

8. At least two (2) of the required CE hours must be in the area of ethics.

9. At least half of the required CE hours must be accrued through participation in live, face-to-face continuing education activities; thus, no more than half of the required CE hours may be earned through online or distance learning continuing education (CE) activities.

10. One three-semester hour (or equivalent) behavioral health-related college course from an approved educational institution, taken during the appropriate certification time period, will be considered equal to 30 continuing education hours (CEs).

11. Courses claimed for continuing education hours must be beyond the course work necessary to meet the educational requirement for DMH professional credentialing.

12. **A special provision is available for individuals for whom it is their first renewal cycle; this provision is only applicable to the individual's first renewal cycle:**

    a. **During the individual's first renewal cycle only**, the CE renewal requirement may be prorated, if necessary. Individuals interested in proration should contact the Division well in advance of the renewal deadline for information and assistance.

    b. Generally, the proration of creditable CEs for renewing individuals for whom it is their first renewal cycle will be calculated on a scale as follows, beginning with the renewing individual's month of full certification issuance, as determined by DMH's records, and ending with the renewal deadline month (September 30th):

        i. *Six (6) months or less of full certification*: a minimum requirement of 7.5 behavioral health-related CE hours;

        ii. *Seven (7) months to 12 months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 15 behavioral health-related CE hours;

        iii. *13 months to 24 months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 30 behavioral health-related CE hours;

        iv. *25 months to 36 months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 45 behavioral health-related CE hours; and,

        v. *37 or more months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 60 behavioral health-related CE hours *(which may be inclusive of the up to eight (8) non-behavioral health-related CE hour provision, as stipulated above).*

    c. Renewing individuals for whom it is their first renewal cycle must include, within their proration of behavioral health-related CEs, at least two (2) hours

in the area of cultural competency and two (2) hours in the area of ethics, as outlined above.

d. Issues related to CE proration not expressly covered in this provision will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Division.

e. The renewal fee is not prorated.

13. DMH allows for the preapproval of various conferences and workshops/educational activities, etc., for DMH professional credentialing continuing education hours. *Information on activities which have received CE preapproval will be maintained by DMH and may also be maintained on the agency (DMH) website.*

14. For continuing education activities which have not been through the CE preapproval process, the continuing education activities will be subject to the approval of the Division at the time of renewal.

15. Within the parameters outlined above, opportunities for CE accrual include, but are not limited to: training provided through the certified individual's place of employment (including DMH-required training as indicated in the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers*), DMH-sponsored training opportunities, and/or conferences/workshops approved by the Division.

16. Relevant training which is completed on an annual basis should only be counted once during the four-year renewal cycle period.

17. Continuing education activities should be presented by a qualified presenter and contain clearly-outlined learning objectives. Meetings, regular work activities, staffing sessions, breaks, social activities, etc., do not count towards fulfilling the CE requirement.

18. Any activity completed for the purpose of achieving the Community Support Specialist certification (such as Case Management Orientation or the web-based Exam/Training component) is not eligible for CE credit.

C. **Reporting the Continuing Education Requirement**

1. Documentation of successful completion of continuing education hours (e.g., training records, staff development printouts, official college transcripts, conference certificates, etc.) should be housed with the Staff Development Officer (SDO) at the individual's current place of employment. The renewing individual should also keep a copy.

2. As part of the renewal process, each renewing individual is asked to attest to the fact that he/she has obtained the required number of appropriate continuing education hours.

3. Unless randomly-selected for audit, renewing individuals in Current Status do not submit CE documentation to the Division of PLACE. *Individuals in Inactive Status must report CE activities at the time of renewal.*

4. For DMH credentialing purposes only, CE documentation should be maintained for six months following the conclusion of the given renewal year.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.4 Renewal Application

A. Prior to the renewal deadline, the Division will send a renewal notice to each certified individual's self-reported home and/or email address. The Division will also notify Staff Development Officers (SDOs) of the upcoming renewal deadline.

B. In addition to the general renewal directions found in this document, the renewal notice will include specific, current instructions on how to renew. Specific directions in the current year's renewal packet, along with specific directions provided on each renewal form, must be followed.

C. Each person who wishes to renew his/her certification must submit a renewal application packet to the Division by the established deadline which includes all required forms and fees.

D. Failure to receive a renewal notice does not relieve the individual from the renewal requirement. Individuals should keep their addresses/contact information updated with the Division.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.5 Renewal Audit

A. Following the conclusion of each renewal period, the Division of PLACE reserves the right to audit randomly-selected renewed individuals to determine compliance with the continuing education requirement. The audit process will include a sample of randomly-selected renewed individuals.

B. If an individual is randomly selected for audit, both the individual and the program SDO will be notified. Along with the notification, the Division will provide detailed instructions for audit procedures.

C. If randomly selected for audit, the renewed individual (in conjunction with the program SDO) will be required to submit to the Division documentation to validate successful

completion of the renewal continuing education requirement. (Examples of sufficient documentation would include, but are not limited to: training records, staff development printouts verified by the SDO, conference certificates, and official college transcripts). This documentation must be submitted within a deadline prescribed by the Division.

D. **In the case of noncompliance,** the audited individual will have up to six months to comply, during which time the credential will be placed in Suspended Status (covered more fully in Chapter 10); the individual will be unable to practice with his/her credential during the period of suspension. Failure to comply within six months will result in the automatic loss of credentialing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.6 Specialist Requests during Renewal

A. *Inactive Status Request*: An individual who is not employed in the state mental health system at the time of renewal may want to request Inactive Status. Individuals must initiate this request by the established renewal deadline and submit all required renewal forms, materials and fees.

B. *Retired Status Request*: An individual who has retired from state mental health system employment at the time of renewal may want to request Retired Status. Individuals must do so by the renewal deadline.

C. *Relinquished Status Request*: An individual who no longer wants to hold the credential may request Relinquished Status. Individuals must do so by the renewal deadline.

D. *Certification status information is covered more fully in Chapter Nine*. In addition to the information in Chapter Nine, instructions on making special requests at the time of renewal will also be included in the current renewal packet; interested individuals should contact the Division of PLACE for assistance.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.7 Certificate Renewal

A. Each individual who successfully renews his/her Current CCSS/CCSS-II credential may continue to use the appropriate professional title and practice as such for the next four-year certification period.

B. Each individual who successfully renews his/her Inactive CCSS/CCSS-II credential may continue to use the appropriate professional title; however, he/she must not practice as a DMH Certified Community Support Specialist during the next four-year certification period (until he/she returns to Current Status).

C. The terms of administrative appeal are applicable to the renewal process.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.8 Certification Expiration

A. **Renewal Deadline**

1. The renewal application packet and fee are due on or before September 30th (or closest prior working day, as prescribed in the current renewal notice) of the given renewal year.

2. Any certified individual wishing to request Inactive, Retired or Relinquished Status at the time of renewal must submit the request so that the Division receives it by the established renewal deadline. Otherwise, without proper renewal, the individual's credential will automatically be changed to Lapsed Status.

3. Unless successfully renewed, an individual's certificate ceases to be valid after September 30th at the end of the certification period.

4. Any certified individual for whom the Division has not received a renewal application packet (or a special request) by September 30th will be expired; his/her certification status will automatically be changed to Lapsed Status.

B. **Late Renewal**

1. Between October 1st and October 31st (or closest prior working days, as determined by the Division), professional certification which has lapsed due to failure to renew may be rectified upon submission of all required renewal forms, materials, and payment in full of the Renewal Fee PLUS payment of a Late Renewal Fee.

2. All problems with renewal applications (or special requests submitted at the time of renewal) must be resolved by October 31st (or closest prior working day, as determined by the Division).

3. Incomplete renewal applications or renewal applications with unresolved deficiencies received by the renewal deadline may be maintained on file through October 31st (or closest prior working day) to allow individuals an opportunity to resolve problem(s). After October 31st (or closest prior working day, as determined by the Division), these credentials are expired and automatically changed to Lapsed Status if the deficiencies were not satisfactorily resolved by this date - no exceptions.

4. The certification of any individual who has not successfully completed either renewal or a special request by October 31st (or closest prior working day, as determined by the Division) is expired. The status of any such individual's credential will automatically be changed to Lapsed Status.

C. **Beginning November 1st**

1. On and after November 1st, an individual who failed to renew or successfully make a status change remains in Lapsed Status and will not be allowed to renew.

2. Following the conclusion of renewal season, each state mental health system program will be provided a list of program employees whose credentials lapsed.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 8: Fees

Rule 8.1 Fee Schedule

A. **Application Fee**: $**30.00**

This fee is due with the submission of an **initial** application packet; **this is a one-time fee**. Individuals who paid the application fee when applying for PCCSS do **not** pay this fee again when applying to upgrade to CCSS. Individuals applying directly for CCSS (thus skipping PCCSS) must pay this one-time fee.

B. **Web-based Exam/Training Fee: As prescribed by DMH**

DMH may prescribe appropriate, non-excessive fees for the web-based training component to cover administrative costs; this fee is subject to change.

C. **Renewal Fee: $40.00** *(subject to change at renewal)*

This fee is due with the submission of the renewal packet; this fee is subject to change at the time of renewal and is reflected in the current renewal notice.

D. **Late Renewal Fee: $25.00**

In addition to the renewal fee, this additional fee is assessed when an individual has allowed his/her certification to lapse after the prescribed renewal deadline but wishes to renew during a brief "late renewal" time period.

E. **Certificate Replacement Fee: $15.00**

If an individual makes more than one request for a replacement certificate, the Division reserves the right to impose the certificate replacement fee. Additional information on certificate replacement is covered in Chapter Five.

F. **Reinstatement Fee**: **$30.00**

This fee is assessed when an individual makes a request to reinstate his/her certification.

G. **Mailing Label Fee**: **$35.00**

This fee is due with the request for mailing labels. This fee is applicable per category of professional credentialing. Mailing label requests will be processed within 14 working days of receipt; the Division reserves the right to refuse any request for mailing labels.

H. **Returned Check Fee: $25.00**

This fee may be imposed by the Division for any check returned due to insufficient funds. Once a return check fee is imposed, remittance to correct the problem will only be accepted via money order.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 8.2 General Fee Provisions

A. All fees pertaining to DMH professional credentialing are nonrefundable and nontransferable.

B. If an application or other credentialing fee is submitted in error, it will not be refunded.

C. Fees are subject to change, with appropriate prior notice.

D. Fees are not prorated.

E. Fees must be paid in full by check or money order made payable to the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. Cash is not accepted.

F. Fees are subject to deposit upon receipt; checks are not held for deposit.

G. No application, renewal application, etc., is considered complete without the required fees.

H. Processing of an application, renewal application, and/or any associated credentialing activities etc., will cease immediately upon return of a check due to insufficient funds.

I. An individual or program whose check has been returned due to insufficient funds may remedy the situation by paying the appropriate fee PLUS the Returned Check Fee by money order only (by a deadline prescribed by the Division).

J. Employers may pay multiple employees' credentialing fees with one check. The check and associated applications/renewal applications, etc., must be submitted together - no exceptions. The employer must clearly identify and match each person and purpose the check covers with the corresponding check. Additionally, the check must only cover DMH professional credentialing fees. Otherwise, the Division reserves the right to return the fee/materials to the program.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 9: Professional Responsibilities

Rule 9.1 Scope of Practice

A. DMH professional credentials are valid only in Mississippi's "state mental health system." DMH Community Support Specialists may only use the title if actively employed in the state mental health system *(or in Inactive Status).*

B. Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialists and Certified Community Support Specialists are certified to provide or supervise community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination services involving application of the principles, methods and procedures of community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination service provision within Mississippi's state mental health system.

C. The scope and type of community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination services provided by Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialists and Certified Community Support Specialists as well as the principles, methods and procedures of community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination service provision are expected to be in compliance with the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers.*

D. DMH Community Support Specialists should only practice within the boundaries of their education, training, supervised or other relevant professional experience, and credential(s) held.

E. This certification does not qualify an individual to provide services outside this scope of practice or in private practice.

F. Practicing beyond the scope of practice may lead to sanctions as described in Chapter 10.

G. A person issued a certificate by the Department of Mental Health may use the title appropriate to his/her category of professional certification while in the employ of a state mental health system program *(or while in Inactive Status).*

H. Professional identification is directly affected by employment. DMH-credentialed individuals who experience a change in or separation from state mental health system employment are expected to follow the relevant guidelines below.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.2 Reporting Changes in Vital Information

A. Credentialed individuals are required to notify the Division within 14 working days of a change in legal name, address or employment.

B. **Name Change**

1. Each credentialed individual should ensure that his/her current wall certificate bears his/her current legal name. An individual whose legal name has changed is expected to request a new certificate reflecting the new name. Once the new certificate is generated, the previous certificate is invalid.

2. To request a name change, the individual should submit a written/email request for a name change, along with a copy of legal documentation of the name change. The request should indicate the new name as it should appear on the replacement certificate. Name changes reported at the time of an upgrade application do not have to be accompanied by a request or copy of the legal documentation; this exemption does not apply to renewal applications.

3. Only individuals in good standing who are currently employed in the state mental health system *(or in Inactive Status)* may request a replacement certificate.

C. **Address Change**

An individual whose email address, mailing address and/or telephone number has changed is expected to contact the Division with the new information.

D. **Employment Change**

1. **Upon separation of the credentialed individual from state mental health system employment**, the individual's DMH professional credential will become null and void unless he/she provides notification of reemployment in the state mental health system or requests and receives an appropriate credential status change according to the procedures established by the Division, as covered in the "Separation from State Mental Health System Employment" section below.

2. Notification of a change in place of employment (not job title) must be submitted in writing/email to the Division of PLACE by either the credentialed individual OR the place of employment from which the credentialed individual is separating.

3. An individual who is either leaving state mental health system employment or changing to a new state mental health system program should follow the requirements under "Separation from State Mental Health System Employment" below.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.3 Separation from State Mental Health System Employment

A. It is the credentialed individual's responsibility to keep track of his/her employment situation (and the potential for notification of separation of employment via the separating employer), accordingly.

B. Once the Division receives written/email notification of separation from employment (as outlined above), the Division will allow the individual a period of up to 45 calendar days from the date of notification to pursue one of the following options:

1. **If the individual has become employed with a new "state mental health system" program**, the individual should update his/her employment information with the Division by submitting a new Verification of Employment Form from the new place of employment.

2. **If the individual IS NO LONGER EMPLOYED in the "state mental heath system**," the individual may request with the Division a status change for his/her credential. **Status change options include:**

    a. Request Relinquished Status (available to provisional and full certification);
    b. Request Extended Status (available only to provisional certification);
    c. Request Inactive Status (available only to full certification); and,
    d. Request Retired Status (available only to full certification).

C. More information on credentialing statuses and how to obtain a status change is listed under the "Credential Status Change Requests," "Provisional Certification Status Categories" and "Full Certification Status Categories" sections in this document.

D. During this 45-day period, unless employed in a state mental health system program and in good standing, individuals in this situation are not allowed to practice.

E. At the end of the 45-day period, if no appropriate action is taken by the credentialed individual to either: 1) update his/her employment or 2) request an appropriate status change, the credential will expire and be changed to either Lapsed or Defaulted Status, as appropriate; this is an automatic process – no notification by the Division will be made. Lapsed and Defaulted Status mean the credential is expired, and the individual no longer holds the credential.

F. Status change requests **initiated by the credentialed individual** are subject to Review Board approval.

G. If a DMH-credentialed individual has a question about what to do if he/she has left state mental health system employment, the individual should contact the Division for assistance at the earliest indication of such separation.

H. DMH-credentialed individuals must be aware that notification of separation of employment may come from either the separating employer OR the credentialed individual. The Division does not notify a credentialed individual when a separating employer has made this notification. The credentialed individual is held to the 45-day time frame, regardless of whether the notification of employment separation came from the credentialed individual or the separating employer.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.4 Credential Status Change Requests

A. Credentialed individuals needing to make a status change request should submit the request in writing (or via email) to the Division of PLACE, along with any pertinent supporting information. Applicable credentialing timelines must be met.

B. Individuals needing assistance regarding status change requests should contact the Division for assistance.

C. Status change requests **initiated by the credentialed individual** are subject to Division of PLACE and/or Review Board approval. The Division/Review Board reserves the right to deny any submitted status change request**.**

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.5 Provisional Certification Status Categories

The following status categories are applicable to individuals holding the Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist credential (PCCSS).

A. **Current Status**

1. An individual holding provisional certification which is in good standing (including timely submission of all forms, fees, changes of information, etc.) and without sanctions will be considered to be in Current Status.

2. An individual whose credential is in Current Status is able to practice within the scope of practice of this credentialing program and the ethical standards/principles.

3. In order to maintain Current Status, a PCCSS is expected to notify the Division in writing (or via email) within 14 working days of a change in vital information such as name, address, employment, etc.

4. The name of a person whose credential is in Current Status will appear on any list produced by the Division if he/she is Current at the time the list is produced.

B. **Extended Status**

1. Extended Status – General Information:

    a. In rare and extenuating circumstances, the Review Board may grant a PCCSS Extended Status on his/her provisional certification.
    b. Extended status will only be granted to a PCCSS who is in good standing at the time of the request.

c. To obtain an extension, the individual should submit a written/email request to the Division of PLACE. The Division will subsequently present the request to the Review Board. In the request, the PCCSS should specifically request Extended Status, provide an explanation as to why the extension is needed and indicate a specific time period for the extension. Any documentation which supports the request should also be submitted. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request.
d. An individual on Extended Status is expected to comply with the terms of the extension as granted by the Review Board. Failure to do so may result in Defaulted Status.
e. The maximum allowable time frame for which an extension may be granted is up to six months *(subject to the approval of the PLACE Review Board).*
f. If the extension request is granted, the provisional expiration date will be moved to the new expiration date, with no break in provisional credentialing dates. However, if the extension request is not granted, the provisional credential will automatically default, effective per the PCCSS's original provisional expiration date.
g. If a PCCSS is approved for Extended Status, he/she will only be allowed one (1) extension.
h. Second or subsequent Extended Status requests will not considered.

2. Extended Status – Individual needs more time to upgrade:

   a. Due to extenuating circumstances, the Review Board may grant Extended Status to an individual who is unable to complete all requirements to upgrade to full certification within the required two year (24 consecutive months) time limit. An extension is intended to allow a PCCSS additional time to complete the upgrade requirements.
   b. An individual granted Extended Status who is currently employed in the state mental health system is allowed to practice as a PCCSS and is expected to complete all requirements of provisional certification by the approved deadline for the extension.

3. Extended Status – Individual has left State Mental Health System Employment:

   a. The Review Board may also grant Extended Status to a PCCSS who has temporarily left employment in a state mental health system program.
   b. An individual granted an extension due to having left state mental health system employment may neither practice as a PCCSS nor register for any Community Support Specialist certification activities for upgrade.
   c. An individual on Extended Status for this reason would need to submit a written/email request to be returned to Current Status, along with a new Verification of Employment Form from the individual's new place of employment.

d. Upon returning to Current Status, the individual will again be allowed to practice as a PCCSS and will be able to register for and attend Community Support Specialist certification activities required for upgrade.
e. An individual who was previously in Extended Status and who has been returned to Current Status is expected to complete all requirements of provisional certification by the approved extension deadline.

C. **Defaulted Status**

1. Defaulted Status means the individual's provisional credential has expired and is no longer valid. A PCCSS may default for the following reasons including, but not limited to:

   a. Failure to complete all upgrade requirements during the two-year, 24 consecutive month Provisional Certification Period;
   b. Failure to submit an upgrade application so that it is received by the Division within established timelines;
   c. Failure to submit a request for Extended Status, or other status change request, so that it is received within established timelines;
   d. Review Board's determination of failure to submit a satisfactory request for Extended (or other) Status;
   e. Failure to comply with the terms of an extension granted by the Review Board; and/or,
   f. Separation from employment in the state mental health system without appropriate change in status category.

2. Upon defaulting from the Community Support Specialist credentialing program, the individual immediately ceases to hold provisional certification (PCCSS).

3. Defaulting from the program immediately overrides any other status category held by a provisionally-certified individual.

4. To return to Current Status, an individual in Defaulted Status would be required to repeat the application process meeting all current requirements, including any specific requirements determined necessary by the Review Board.

5. Except in rare and extenuating circumstances, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Review Board, a PCCSS who has defaulted twice will not be allowed to reapply for this credentialing program a third time.

D. **Relinquished Status**

1. A provisionally-certified individual who determines that he/she no longer needs/wants to hold and maintain professional certification may submit a written/email request to the Review Board requesting Relinquished Status. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request.

2. Once approved for Relinquished Status, the individual no longer holds the credential. The individual's certificate is null and void.

3. To return to Current Status, a provisional individual in Relinquished Status would be required to repeat the application process, meeting all current requirements, including any specific requirements determined necessary by the Review Board.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.6 Full Certification Status Categories

The following status categories are applicable to individuals holding full certification as a Certified Community Support Specialist (CCSS).

A. **Current Status**

1. An individual holding certification which is in good standing (including timely submission of all forms, fees, changes of information, etc.) and without sanctions will be considered to be in Current Status.

2. An individual whose credential is in Current Status is able to practice within the scope of practice of this credentialing program and the ethical standards/principles.

3. In order to maintain Current Status, a CCSS is expected to notify the Division in writing (or via email) within 14 working days of a change in vital information such as name, address, employment, etc.

4. The name of a person whose credential is in Current Status will appear on any list produced by the Division if he/she is Current at the time the list is produced.

B. **Inactive Status**

1. The Review Board may grant Inactive Status to a fully-certified individual who is leaving employment in the state mental health system and who wishes to maintain the credential.

2. Inactive Status will only be granted to a fully-certified individual who is in good standing (Current Status) at the time of the request.

3. In order to pursue Inactive Status, the certified individual must submit a written/email request to the Division of PLACE. The Division will present the request to the Review Board. In the request, the fully-certified individual should request Inactive Status, provide an explanation as to why the status change is needed and indicate a specific time period for the inactivity. Documentation which supports the request may be submitted along with the request. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request.

a. **Individuals granted Inactive Status must meet renewal requirements**, including payment of required fees and completion of required continuing education requirements. Otherwise, the certified individual's credential will lapse.
b. An individual in Inactive Status is allowed to continue to use the professional title behind his/her name, but is not allowed to practice.
c. A person in Inactive Status may be returned to Current Status upon submission of a written/email request, along with an appropriate Verification of Employment Form reflecting current employment within the state mental health system.

C. **Lapsed Status**

1. Lapsed Status means the fully-certified individual's credential has expired and is no longer valid. A fully-certified individual's credential may lapse for any of the following reasons, including but not limited to:

    a. Failure to renew professional certification according to established timelines;
    b. Failure to make a special request, according to established timelines and obtain an appropriate certification status;
    c. Review Board's determination of failure to submit a satisfactory request for a status change;
    d. Failure to comply with the terms of the status change request approved by the Review Board; and/or,
    e. Separation from state mental health system employment without appropriate status change.

2. Lapsing from the program immediately overrides any other status category held by a fully-certified individual. Upon lapsing, the individual immediately ceases to hold certification.

D. **Retired Status**

1. The Review Board may grant Retired Status to an individual who has retired and is no longer employed in the state mental health system. Retired status is intended for individuals who have ceased working because they have either reached the age of retirement or have accumulated the number of work years to retire.

2. In order to pursue Retired Status, the individual (upon retirement) must submit a written/email request to the Division of PLACE. The Division will present the request to the Review Board. In the request, the individual should request Retired Status and indicate the date of retirement. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request. The individual granted Retired Status is no longer required to meet renewal requirements/fees and is permitted to keep his/her certificate.

E. **Relinquished Status**

1. A fully-certified individual who determines that he/she no longer needs/wants to hold and maintain professional certification may submit a written/email request to the Review Board requesting Relinquished Status.

2. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request. Once approved for Relinquished Status, the individual no longer holds the credential. The individual's certificate is null and void.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.7 Certification Reinstatement

A. A Community Support Specialist whose **full certification** has expired **within the past three years**, as determined by the Division's records (Relinquished, Retired or Lapsed Status) and who **expired in good standing**, may be eligible to reactivate his/her certification.

B. Reinstatement of certification is determined on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the Division and the Review Board. Individuals desiring reinstatement should submit a written/email request for reinstatement to the Division. The Division will subsequently review and present the request to the Review Board. Along with the request, the individual must submit a Verification of Employment Form which documents current state mental health system employment. If the request for reinstatement is subsequently approved, the individual must then submit (by a prescribed deadline) the following to the Division in order to finalize reinstatement: 1) paying the reinstatement fee, paying past renewal fees (including late charges), as determined by the Division or Review Board; and, submitting acceptable documentation of continuing education credit as determined by the Division or Review Board. Fees are subject to change.

C. Individuals interested in reinstatement should contact the Division for additional information.

D. **Reinstatement is not available to provisionally-certified individuals.**

E. **During a renewal year, an individual desiring reinstatement must wait six months before applying for reinstatement.**

F. Beyond three years, post-expiration, total reapplication is required.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.8 Credential Verification and Reporting

A. Upon request, the Division reports specific information about DMH-credentialed individuals. The fields of information which may be shared with individuals making inquiry are:

1. Name;
2. Type of certification;
3. Certificate number;
4. Date of issuance;
5. Date of expiration;
6. Credential status; and,
7. Whether or not formal disciplinary action has been taken against the individual.

B. During renewal season, the Division reserves the right to hold such verification requests until all credentialing records are up-to-date, post renewal.

C. The Division does not provide application submission/status verifications.

D. The Division does not provide verifications that a provisional applicant has met his/her upgrade application deadline.

E. The Division reserves the right to deny any credential verification request.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.9 DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct

All applicants and individuals holding a DMH professional credential shall comply with ethical standards/principles as established by the PLACE Review Board and the Department of Mental Health.

A. **Introduction**

1. The State Legislature granted Statutory Authority for Mississippi Department of Mental Health certification/licensure programs in 1996. As a result, the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification was created to develop and implement the programs. Having been amended by the State Legislature in 1997, Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* currently includes a provision authorizing the State Board of Mental Health to certify/license case managers (i.e., community support specialists), mental health therapists, mental retardation [IDD] therapists, mental health/retardation [IDD] administrators, addiction counselors and others as deemed appropriate by the State Board of Mental Health. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board serves as the governing body for the everyday professional conduct of DMH-credentialed individuals. Individuals credentialed through the DMH may identify with different professional associations and are often certified by other groups with promulgated codes of ethics.

2. The safety, health, welfare and best interest of the individuals and families receiving services, and the public at large, are the primary guiding principles for appropriate professional conduct of all individuals holding a DMH professional credential.

Individuals holding a DMH professional credential should adhere to all parts of the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct* listed below.

3. Applicable federal and state laws, the principles, program policies and any other pertinent rules must be observed when conducting business as a DMH-credentialed professional. Alleged violations of the principles may be subject to disciplinary action if the Review Board finds that a person is guilty of any violation of the principles. Information on disciplinary action is covered in Chapter 10.

4. The *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct* herein referred to as "the principles," provide a minimal ethical standard for the professional behavior of all individuals credentialed through DMH. The principles provide a level of expectation for ethical practice from all who hold a DMH credential. In addition, the principles provide an enforceable standard for all DMH-credentialed individuals and facilitate an avenue for recourse in case of a perceived ethical violation. While the principles cannot guarantee ethical practice by all DMH-credentialed individuals or resolve all issues, the intent of the principles is to provide guidelines for individuals who, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments. **Six general principles of ethical and professional conduct follow.**

B. **Principle I: Competence**

1. Individuals holding a current credential from the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) must be employed by a program that receives funding from or is certified or operated/administered by the DMH.
2. Individuals who hold a DMH professional credential must notify the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification upon any change affecting credential status, especially a change in employment.
3. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, supervised experience or other relevant professional experience.
4. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must provide services only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, supervised experience or other relevant professional experience. Services provided must be based on the most current information and knowledge available within the scope of services of the DMH.
5. Individuals who hold another professional credential shall abide by all principles contained herein.
6. The principles do not alleviate the individual's responsibility to other ethical, programmatic or professional guidelines. Rather, the principles must be adhered to in addition to other applicable ethical, programmatic and professional criteria.
7. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must comply with all applicable sections of the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers*, as appropriate (including, but not limited to, the *Operational Standards'*

sections pertaining to confidentiality, ethical conduct and the rights of individuals receiving services).

C. **Principle II: Confidentiality**

1. Individuals holding a credential from DMH have an obligation to respect the confidentiality rights of the individuals with whom they work and must take reasonable precautions to preserve confidentiality.
2. Members of a treatment team or those collaborating on the care of an individual shall maintain confidentiality within the parameters of the treatment setting.
3. Confidential information may only be disclosed with appropriate valid consent from the individual receiving services or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of the individual.
4. All information collected for the purpose of service delivery must be kept confidential and released only when authorized by redisclosure consent or state (or federal) law.
5. Individuals involved in family, couples, marital or group counseling must be informed of their individual right to confidentiality.
6. DMH-credentialed individuals must preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others, as well as agency policy concerning the disclosure of confidential information and must explain such policy to the individual receiving services.
7. When consulting with colleagues, DMH-credentialed individuals do not share confidential information that could lead to the identification of an individual who is receiving services with whom they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained the prior consent of the person. Information may only be shared to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes of consultation.
8. Permission for the use of electronic recording of interviews must be secured, prior to the interview, from the individual receiving services or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of the individual receiving services.
9. Confidentiality may be waived if disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to oneself or other identifiable person or when laws or regulations require disclosure without an individual's consent.
10. The confidentiality privilege for the individual receiving services is waived if the individual brings charges against a DMH-credentialed individual.
11. Confidentiality may be waived in compliance with appropriate statutes.
12. In all instances, individuals who hold a credential from the DMH should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose.

D. **Principle III: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity**

1. Individuals who hold a credential from DMH have a primary responsibility to the individual to whom they provide services. The respect of the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all people is of the utmost importance.
2. DMH-credentialed individuals must be aware of and accept the cultural, individual and role differences that occur in the service delivery environment.

3. DMH-credentialed individuals do not discriminate against any individual because of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability or political affiliation.
4. DMH-credentialed individuals actively work to eliminate the effect of bias on service provision, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone discriminatory practices.
5. Individuals holding a DMH credential who witness or have knowledge of unethical or discriminatory practices of other individuals who hold a DMH credential are obligated to report such practices to the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification.
6. DMH-credentialed individuals must be respectful of and responsive to individuals with cultural needs.
7. DMH-credentialed individuals must practice appropriate, relevant and sensitive interventions which enable effective work in cross-cultural situations.
8. DMH-credentialed individuals must maintain a fundamental respect for the beliefs, customs, institutions and ethnic heritages of all individuals served.

E. **Principle IV: Reporting Abuse**

DMH-credentialed individuals must meet reporting requirements as outlined by the Vulnerable Adults Act and the child abuse reporting statutes.

F. **Principle V: Sexual Harassment/Misconduct**

1. Sexual harassment/misconduct is considered to be any unwelcome solicitation, physical advance or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature.
2. Sexual harassment/misconduct can consist of a single onerous act or multiple persistent or pervasive acts.
3. Individuals who hold a credential from DMH will not knowingly engage in behavior that is sexually harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact within the service delivery environment.
4. Any behavior that could be construed as sexual harassment during the DMH-credentialed individual's function of providing services for a program that is funded/certified/administered through the DMH, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

G. **Principle VI: Drug Free Workplace**

1. The Department of Mental Health adopted written policy in Section 71-7-1 through 71-7-31 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* which outlines state policy regarding a Drug Free Workplace.
2. Programs funded/certified/administered and individuals who hold a credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health will be expected to abide by this provision.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 10: Complaints and Disciplinary Action

Rule 10.1 Grounds for Disciplinary Action

A. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must conduct their activities and services in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, these *Standards & Requirements*, the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct*, and any other applicable rules/regulations.

B. An individual holding a DMH professional credential may be subject to disciplinary action if the Review Board finds that he/she is guilty of any of the following or has knowledge of the following and has not reported such to the Division of PLACE. Grounds for disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

1. Negligence in the practice or performance of professional services or activities;
2. Engaging in dishonorable, unethical, unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or cause harm in the course of professional services or activities;
3. Engaging in lewd conduct in connection with professional services or activities;
4. Obtaining a Department of Mental Health certificate or renewal certificate by fraud, deceit, material deception or other misrepresentation;
5. Perpetrating or cooperating in fraud or material deception in obtaining or renewing professional credentialing or attempting the same;
6. Being convicted of any crime which has a substantial relationship to the professionally credentialed individual's activities and services or an essential element of which is misstatement, fraud, or dishonesty;
7. Being convicted of any crime which is a felony under federal or state law;
8. Engaging in or permitting the performance of unacceptable services personally or by assistants working under the credentialed individual's supervision due to the credentialed individual's deliberate or grossly negligent act or failure to act, regardless of whether actual damage is established;
9. Treating any person differently or detrimentally because of race, color, creed, age, gender, religion, national origin, disability or political affiliation;
10. Engaging in false or misleading advertising;
11. Revealing confidential information except as may be required by law;
12. Failing to inform a client of the fact that the client no longer needs the services of the credentialed individual;
13. Performing services for compensation or representing oneself as a DMH-credentialed professional while holding a certificate in Defaulted, Lapsed, Relinquished, Suspended, Surrendered, or Revoked Status;
14. Attempting to utilize the certificate issued by the Department of Mental Health for private practice or for services outside the scope of practice;
15. Engaging in any conduct considered by the Review Board to be detrimental to the profession; and/or,
16. Engaging in any conduct considered by the Review Board to be in violation of the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct*.

17. Revocation by any professional credentialing body may result in disciplinary action and/or revocation of a DMH professional credential. It is the DMH-credentialed individual's responsibility to inform DMH of any previous or pending disciplinary action against him/her by any professional credentialing body or association. DMH-credentialed individuals who have had any past or currently held professional credential suspended, placed on probation, revoked, or otherwise be the subject of any disciplinary action, must promptly notify the DMH Division of PLACE.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.2 Complaints and Investigation

A. All complaints concerning a DMH-credentialed individual's professional service or activities must be received by the Division of PLACE.

B. The individual lodging the complaint should include his/her contact information. The complaint should include the charges set forth with such clarity as to inform the Division, the PLACE Review Board and the credentialed individual of the issue involved. Complaints lodged with insufficient information may be unable to be addressed by the Review Board.

C. The Division of PLACE will assign each complaint a case number and will log each complaint by recording the following information:

    1. The DMH-credentialed individual's name;
    2. The name and contact information of the complaining party;
    3. The date of the complaint;
    4. A brief statement of the complaint; and,
    5. Disposition or attempts at settlement.

D. Substantial, jurisdictionally-appropriate complaints, as determined by the PLACE Review Board, will be evaluated and investigated by the Review Board, with consult, as needed, with the DMH Legal Division. A copy of all communications pertaining to complaints/investigations will be forwarded to the DMH attorney. The Review Board, with DMH Legal Division consult, as needed, will determine the necessity of a disciplinary hearing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.3 Notice of Complaint and Disciplinary Hearing

A. Upon determination that a disciplinary hearing is needed, the Review Board will notify the DMH-credentialed individual that a complaint has been received and that a disciplinary hearing will be held.

B. The DMH-credentialed individual shall be notified at least 30 calendar days before the date of the disciplinary hearing. Notification will be considered to have been given if the notice

was personally received by the DMH-credentialed individual or if the notice was mailed "certified, return receipt requested" to the last known address as listed with the Division of PLACE.

C. The notice will inform the DMH-credentialed individual of the facts which are the basis of the complaint and which are specific enough to enable the credentialed individual to defend against the complaints. The notice of the complaint and the disciplinary hearing shall also inform the credentialed individual of the following:

1. The date, time and location of the disciplinary hearing;
2. That the DMH-credentialed individual may appear personally at the disciplinary hearing and may be represented by counsel;
3. That the DMH-credentialed individual shall have the right to produce witnesses and evidence on his/her behalf and shall have the right to cross-examine adverse witnesses and evidence;
4. That the Rules of Evidence do not apply;
5. That the disciplinary hearing could result in sanctions being taken against the DMH-credentialed individual;
6. That the Review Board will, in writing, advise the DMH-credentialed individual of any sanction(s) to be imposed and the basis for the Review Board's action; and,
7. That disposition of any formal complaint may be made by consent order or stipulation between the Review Board and the DMH-credentialed individual.

D. The disciplinary hearing will be an informal hearing and will be presided over by the Review Board Chairperson.

E. The Review Board will provide written notification to the DMH-credentialed individual as to any sanction(s) being imposed and the basis for the Review Board's action. This notification will be considered to have been given if the notice was personally received by the DMH-credentialed individual or if the notice was mailed "certified, return receipt requested" to the last known address as listed with the Division of PLACE.

F. If disciplinary action is taken against an individual, his/her employer (along with any applicable third party) may be notified by DMH.

G. All disciplinary hearing proceedings are matters of public record and shall be preserved pursuant to state law. The final disposition of any disciplinary hearing will be recorded in Board minutes.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.4 Sanctions

A. The Review Board may impose sanctions, singly or in combination, when it finds that a DMH-credentialed individual is guilty of any of the offenses referred to in the "Grounds for Disciplinary Action" section of this chapter.

B. Sanctions which may be imposed include:

1. Issuance of a letter of official reprimand to the DMH-credentialed individual;
2. Refusal to renew a certificate;
3. Restriction or limitation of the individual's scope of practice;
4. Suspension of the certificate for any period of time;
5. Revocation of the certificate;
6. Approval of the individual's request for surrender of professional credential; and/or,
7. Assessment of reasonable costs for inquiries, disciplinary hearing(s) and/or complaint resolution.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.5 Disciplinary Status Categories

Disciplinary status categories are applicable to individuals holding any level of credentialing available through the DMH Community Support Specialist Certification Program.

A. **Limited**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may choose to restrict or limit a certified individual's practice.
2. To return to Current Status, an individual in Limited Status would be required to meet all requirements as determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

B. **Suspended**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may choose to invalidate an individual's certification for any period of time.

    a. The individual's certificate shall be turned over to the Division for the period of suspension.
    b. To return to Current Status, an individual in Suspended Status would be required to meet all requirements as determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

2. An individual's certification may also be suspended due to noncompliance with the CE renewal requirement, as determined by the audit process described in Chapter Seven.

C. **Surrendered**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may choose to request the surrender of an individual's certificate.

2. In addition, the certified individual may request Surrendered Status. However, the certified individual's request for Surrendered Status is subject to the approval of the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.
3. The surrendered certificate shall be turned over to the Division.
4. To return to Current Status, an individual in Surrendered Status would be required to meet all requirements as determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

D. **Revoked**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may revoke an individual's certification.
2. Once professional certification is revoked, the individual must return his/her certificate to the Division.
3. Following the period of revocation established by the Review Board, the individual may reapply for certification by repeating the application process, meeting all current professional certification requirements, in addition to any additional requirements determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.6 Disciplinary Appeal

A. Following a disciplinary hearing, a DMH-credentialed individual aggrieved by a decision of the Review Board related to the disciplinary action/sanctions has the right to appeal to the DMH Executive Director.

B. The credentialed individual must notify the Division and submit the written notice of appeal within 15 calendar days of the mailing of the written notification of the Review Board's action.

C. The DMH Executive Director will review the DMH-credentialed individual's case and notify the credentialed individual of the results of this review within 30 days.

D. A DMH-credentialed individual aggrieved by the DMH Executive Director's decision regarding the appeal may then appeal to the State Board of Mental Health. Appeals to the State Board of Mental Health must be made within 30 calendar days of the mailing of the DMH Executive Director's final decision; the appeal must be made and conducted in accordance with established Board policy.

E. All submitted appeals must be clearly marked "Notice of Appeal" in bold-faced type, specifically stating that the notice is an appeal.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 11: Glossary

Rule 11.1 DMH Community Support Specialist Program Terms and Definitions

A. The DMH Community Support Specialist *Standards & Requirements* glossary is listed below.

B. The following terms and definitions apply to the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program:

1. **Applicant:** An individual who has submitted a *complete* application packet for DMH professional credentialing

2. **Approved Educational Institution:** An *institution* of higher learning which is accredited by a Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)-recognized and/or a United States Department of Education (USDE)-recognized accrediting body
.
3. **Audit:** Random selection of renewed individuals for the purpose of determining compliance with the continuing education (CE) renewal requirement

4. **Board:** The Mississippi State Board of Mental Health

5. **Case Management Orientation:** A training/corresponding exam which was previously administered by the DMH; one of two options for meeting the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program Exam/Training requirement

6. **Certificate:** The document issued by DMH attesting to an individual's DMH professional credential

7. **Certification Period:** Individuals holding full certification are on a four-year certification schedule, referred to as the "certification period." Qualified CCSSs and CCSS-IIs renew every four years by the renewal deadline.

8. **Certified Community Support Specialist (CCSS):** An individual who obtains and maintains the CCSS credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health; *this credential was formerly known as CCMP and CCMP-I.*

9. **Certified Community Support Specialist II (CCSS-II):** An individual who obtained and maintains the CCSS-II credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health; (This level of credentialing was discontinued effective January 2009. Though no longer available to new applicants, those who obtained the CCSS-II credential prior to its discontinuance may continue to renew it as long as renewal requirements are met); *this credential was formerly known as CCMP-II.*

10. **Community Support Services:** Community support services as described in the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental*

Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers; community support services generally refer to an array of support services which focus on the individual's ability to succeed in the community; to identify and access needed services; and, to show improvement in school, work and family and integration and contributions within the community.

11. **Continuing Education (CE) Hours:** Educational/training activities required for renewal which are designed to increase the professional proficiency of an individual holding a DMH professional credential; one Continuing Education Hour (CE) consists of 60 consecutive minutes of training

12. **Credential(ing):** A generic term referring to any or all levels of DMH professional certification

13. **Date of Issuance:** The assigned date on which a DMH professional credential becomes effective

14. **Director of Community Support Services/Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination:** The Director of Community Support Services or the Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination provides direct oversight of a community support specialist's or ID/DD Waiver support coordinator's work *(as appropriate)* and is the individual(s) at each Mississippi state mental health system program designated to verify the community support *(or ID/DD Waiver support coordination)* work experience requirement for full certification.

15. **Division/Division of PLACE:** The Department of Mental Health, Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE)

16. **DMH:** The Mississippi Department of Mental Health

17. **DMH Executive Director:** The Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

18. ***DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers/DMH Operational Standards*:** Manual published by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health which establishes and promulgates required operational standards for programs receiving DMH certification

19. **ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination Services:** ID/DD Waiver support coordination services are provided to individuals enrolled in the ID/DD Waiver. Support coordination services coordinate and monitor all services an individual on the ID/DD Waiver receives, regardless of funding source, to ensure services are adequate, appropriate, meet individual needs, and ensure the individual's health and welfare needs are met.

20. **PLACE Review Board/Review Board:** The Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board

21. **Provisional Certification Period:** The Provisional Certification Period is the time period an individual holds **provisional** certification (PCCSS). The Provisional Certification Period begins on the day the PCCSS credential is issued and can last for a maximum of 24 consecutive months. Provisional certification is temporary and nonrenewable. By the end of the Provisional Certification Period, the PCCSS is expected to have completed all requirements to upgrade to full certification.

22. **Provisionally Certified Community Support Specialist (PCCSS):** An individual who obtains the PCCSS credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. PCCSS is a temporary, nonrenewable certification. PCCSSs work towards full certification as a Certified Community Support Specialist (CCSS); *this credential was formerly known as PCCMP*.

23. **Staff Development Officer (SDO):** State mental health system program employee(s) who is responsible for maintaining staff development records and assisting in the verification of ongoing continuing education for renewal applicants. The SDO also serves as a liaison between the program and the Division and as a resource to his/her program concerning DMH professional credentialing. The SDO is appointed by the Program Director; a record of SDO appointments is maintained on file by the Division.

24. **State Mental Health System:** The network of programs in Mississippi which are certified, funded, and/or operated/administered by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health *(and also as outlined and defined in Section 41-4-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated).*

25. **Upgrade:** Progression (i.e., moving) from provisional (temporary) certification (PCCSS) to full certification (CCSS)

26. **Web-based Training Component**: A customized collection of e-learning courses (and corresponding exams) designed to address basic community support *(and ID/DD Waiver support coordination)* knowledge; one of two options for meeting the DMH Community Support Specialist credentialing program Exam/Training requirement

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated

~~**Title 24: Mental Health**~~

~~**Part 3: DMH Case Management Professional Standards & Requirements**~~

~~**Mississippi Department of Mental Health**~~
~~Edwin C. LeGrand III – Executive Director~~

~~**DMH Case Management Professional**~~
~~**Standards & Requirements**~~

~~**Effective January 1, 2011**~~

~~**Available through:**~~

~~Mississippi Department of Mental Health~~
~~Division of Professional Licensure & Certification~~

~~**IMPORTANT:**~~
~~**This credential is for qualified individuals who are currently employed in Mississippi's "state mental health system," as defined in this document. Please review the DMH Case Management Professional credentialing requirements in this document before submitting an application.**~~

~~**DMH Case Management Professional**~~
~~**Standards & Requirements**~~

~~General inquiries pertaining to DMH professional credentialing and/or application assistance needs should be directed to the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE).~~

~~**Contact Information:**~~

~~Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH)~~
~~Division of Professional Licensure & Certification (PLACE)~~
~~1101 Robert E. Lee Building~~
~~239 North Lamar Street~~
~~Jackson, MS 39201~~
~~601-359-1288 (DMH Main #)~~
~~601-359-6295 (Fax)~~
~~www.dmh.ms.gov~~

~~601-359-5360 **(PLACE Main #)**~~
place@dmh.state.ms.us ~~**(PLACE email)**~~

~~DMH Case Management Professional~~
~~Standards & Requirements~~

~~Table of Contents~~

~~Chapter One – General Information~~

~~About the Mississippi Department of Mental Health Page 5~~
~~About the DMH Case Management Professional Credential Page 5~~
~~DMH Case Management Professional Certification Levels Page 6~~
~~Professional Titles Page 7~~
~~State Mental Health System Page 7~~
~~Updates Page 8~~
~~Nondiscrimination Page 8~~
~~Americans with Disabilities Act Page 8~~
~~Application Booklets Page 8~~
~~Application Time Limits Page 8~~
~~Jurisdictional Limitations Page 9~~
~~Final Interpretation Page 9~~

~~Chapter Two – Organization~~

~~Division of Professional Licensure & Certification (PLACE) Page 10~~
~~PLACE Review Board Page 10~~
~~DMH Executive Director Page 12~~
~~State Board of Mental Health Page 12~~

~~Chapter Three – Certification Requirements~~

~~Provisionally Certified Case Management Professional Requirements Page 13~~
~~PCCMP Upgrade Requirements Page 13~~
~~Certified Case Management Professional Requirements Page 14~~
~~Certification Requirements - Categories & Descriptions Page 14~~

~~Chapter Four – Application Procedures~~

~~PCCMP (Provisional Certification) Application Packet Page 18~~
~~CCMP (Full Certification) Application Packet Page 18~~
~~General Application Guidelines Page 19~~

~~Chapter Five – Certification Phases~~

~~Application Phase Page 23~~
~~Certification Phase Page 24~~
~~Certificate Issuance Page 24~~
~~Administrative Appeal Page 26~~

~~Chapter Six – Certification Timelines~~

~~PCCMP Certification – Upgrade Information & Timelines Page 27~~
~~CCMP -Certification Length & Timelines Page 28~~

~~**Chapter Seven – Renewal**~~
~~Renewal General Information Page 29~~
~~Renewal Deadline Page 29~~
~~Renewal Requirements Page 29~~
~~Renewal Application Page 32~~
~~Renewal Audit Page 32~~
~~Special Requests during Renewal Page 33~~
~~Certificate Renewal Page 33~~
~~Certificate Expiration Page 33~~

~~**Chapter Eight - Fees**~~
~~Fee Schedule Page 35~~
~~General Fee Provisions Page 36~~

~~**Chapter Nine – Professional Responsibilities**~~
~~Scope of Practice Page 37~~
~~Reporting Changes in Vital Information Page 37~~
~~Separation from State Mental Health System Employment Page 38~~
~~Credential Status Change Requests Page 39~~
~~Provisional Certification Status Categories Page 40~~
~~Full Certification Status Categories Page 42~~
~~Certification Reinstatement Page 44~~
~~Credential Verification & Reporting Page 44~~
~~DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct Page 45~~

~~**Chapter 10 – Complaints & Disciplinary Action**~~
~~Grounds for Disciplinary Action Page 49~~
~~Complaints & Investigation Page 50~~
~~Notice of Complaint & Disciplinary Hearing Page 50~~
~~Sanctions Page 51~~
~~Disciplinary Status Categories Page 52~~
~~Disciplinary Appeal Page 53~~

~~**Glossary** Page 54~~

Title 24: Mental Health

Part 3: DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Standards & Requirements

Part 3 Chapter 1: General Information

Rule 1.1 About the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) administers the public mental health service delivery system in Mississippi. DMH was created in 1974 by an act of the Mississippi Legislature, Regular Session. The statute placed mental health, alcohol/drug abuse, and intellectual/developmental disabilities programs into one agency. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health is governed by the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health, a nine-member board whose members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate.

~~More information about DMH can be found on the DMH website at www.dmh.ms.gov or by contacting DMH; contact information is located inside the document cover.~~

B. DMH Mission: "Supporting a better tomorrow by making a difference in the lives of Mississippians with mental illness, substance abuse problems and intellectual/developmental disabilities one person at a time."

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.2 Statutory Authority

A. Statutory authority for the certification of DMH ~~Case Management Professionals~~ Community Support Specialists was granted in 1996 by the Mississippi Legislature.

B. Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* authorizes the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health (through DMH) "to certify/license case managers (i.e., community support specialists), mental health therapists, mental retardation (i.e., intellectual/developmental disabilities) therapists," and others as deemed appropriate by the Board. In 1997, authority was expanded to include the certification/licensure of "mental health/retardation (i.e., intellectual/developmental disabilities) program administrators" and "addiction counselors."

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.3 About the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Credential

A. DMH professional credentials are designed primarily for individuals who are not already professionally credentialed and who are employed in Mississippi's state mental health system.

B. **Employment in Mississippi's "state mental health system," as defined in this document, is a mandatory requirement to apply for and hold a DMH professional credential.**

C. The DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program is designed to promote the provision of quality ~~case management~~ community support services in Mississippi's "state mental health system."

D. Full certification attests to an individual's:

1. Educational background;
2. Relevant work experience;
3. Demonstration of mastery of basic knowledge pertinent to the field of state mental health system ~~case management~~ community support and/or Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) Waiver support coordination service provision;
4. Continued participation in relevant educational activities, through the continuing education (CE) renewal requirement; and,
5. Agreement to adhere to the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct.*

E. *Prior to January 1, 2013, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health's "DMH Community Support Specialist" professional credentialing program was known as the "DMH Case Management Professional" professional credentialing program*.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.4 DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Certification Levels

The DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Credentialing Program has three (3) levels of certification:

A. **Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS)**

1. The Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS) credential is a temporary and nonrenewable credential. *(This credential was formerly known as "Provisionally Certified Case Management Professional – PCCMP").*

2. Provisional Certification (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS) allows qualified individuals who do not meet the requirements to apply directly for full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS) to become temporarily credentialed while pursuing full certification.
3. Provisional certification is valid for up to two years (24 consecutive months) from the date of issuance; this time frame is referred to as the "Provisional Certification Period."
4. Once an individual obtains the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential, he/she progresses (upgrades) to full certification as a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS by successfully completing the upgrade requirements.

B. **Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~CCMP~~ CCSS)**

1. The Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~CCMP~~ CCSS) credential is full certification. *(This credential was formerly known as "Certified Case Management Professional - CCMP" and "Certified Case Management Professional I - CCMP-I").*
2. Full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS) is renewable every four years, as long as renewal requirements are met.
3. Individuals initially meeting the requirements for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS, as outlined in Chapter Three, should apply directly for this level of credential, thereby skipping provisional certification. Otherwise, an individual applies for ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS and then later, once upgrade requirements are met, applies for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS.

C. **Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist II (~~CCMP-II~~ CCSS-II)**

1. The Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist II (~~CCMP-II~~ CCSS-II) credential is full certification. *(This credential was formerly known as "Certified Case Management Professional II - CCMP-II").*
2. This level of credentialing was discontinued effective January 2009; it is no longer available to new applicants.
3. Individuals who obtained the ~~CCMP-II~~ CCSS-II credential prior to discontinuance may continue to renew it as long as renewal requirements are met.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.5 Professional Titles

Recognized professional titles within the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program are:

A. DMH "Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist" or the abbreviation ~~"PCCMP"~~ "PCCSS" *(formerly "Provisionally Certified Case Management Professional – PCCMP");*

B. DMH "Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist" or the abbreviation~~s~~ ~~"CCMP"~~ "CCSS" ~~or "CCMP -I"~~ *(formerly "Certified Case Management Professional - CCMP" and "Certified Case Management Professional I – CCMP-I")*; and,

C. DMH "Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist II" or the abbreviation ~~"CCMP-II"~~ "CCSS-II" *(formerly "Certified Case Management Professional II - CCMP-II"); (no longer offered to new applicants).*

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.6 State Mental Health System

A. **DMH professional credentials are valid only in Mississippi's "state mental health system."**

B. For the purposes of DMH professional credentialing, the "state mental health system" is defined as programs which are certified, funded and/or operated/administered by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health *(and also as outlined and defined in Section 41-4-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated)*.~~and/or Programs certified/licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health that are operated by the "state mental health system" (i.e., Mississippi Department of Mental Health).~~

C. **Only individuals currently employed in the "state mental health system," as defined in this document (above), are eligible to apply for and hold a DMH professional credential.**

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.7 Updates

A. This document is updated and revised periodically. ~~It is~~ The applicant/DMH-credentialed ~~certified~~ individual~~'s~~ (or other interested person~~'s~~) is responsible for ensuring ~~responsibility to ensure~~ that he/she has the most current version of this document.

B. Affected persons must comply with, and are responsible for, provisions contained in the most current version, including utilization of current application and related forms.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.8 Nondiscrimination and Americans with Disabilities Act

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health does not discriminate because of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation. The Department of Mental Health promotes nondiscriminatory practices and procedures in all phases of state service administration, as well as in programs funded and/or certified/operated by the Department of Mental Health.

B. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health complies with all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If requested, special accommodations to aid in the completion of forms or related credentialing matters will be provided.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.9 Application Booklets

A. This document and the corresponding application forms are available online. Interested individuals should download a copy from the agency (DMH) website.

B. Individuals who need a print copy should contact the Division of PLACE. ~~www.dmh.ms.gov~~

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.10 Application Time Limits

A. Initial applications will remain open for two years from date of receipt. During that time, applicants have the opportunity to rectify any deficiencies.

B. Following two years from the date of receipt ~~once this time period has passed~~, incomplete applications (*initial and upgrade)*, applications containing unresolved deficiencies *(initial and upgrade)*, and applications which did not result in a credential being awarded (*initial and upgrade)* ~~will be void and destroyed~~ will no longer be maintained by the Division. Additional ~~various~~ timelines relating to upgrade and renewal applications are covered more fully in the relevant sections of this document.

C. Applicants should ~~be sure to~~ make copies of all application forms (except the sealed materials) before submitting the application. DMH will not return forms to applicants ~~you~~ or anyone else once the ~~your~~ application has been submitted.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.11 Jurisdictional Limitations

A. This program is limited to the issuance of professional credentialing through the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program.

B. Actions of the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification, the Professional Licensure and Certification Review Board, the Department of Mental Health and the State Board of Mental Health should not in any way be construed as a recommendation for or against personnel action.

C. It is not the intent of DMH to monitor members of other appropriately-regulated professional credentials in Mississippi. No provisions in these standards and requirements should be

construed as overlapping or interfering with the jurisdiction of other appropriately-regulated professional credentials.

D. Holding a DMH professional credential does not exempt an individual from any other professional certification/licensure required by state law.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 1.12 Final Interpretation

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health is responsible for the final interpretation of all matters pertaining to DMH professional credentialing, including (but not limited to) all provisions contained within this document. This interpretation will be considered binding on all applicants and DMH-credentialed individuals (unless otherwise preempted by the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health).

B. Any provisions or situations not expressly covered in this document will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of DMH, the Division of PLACE, the PLACE Review Board and, ~~if~~ as appropriate, the State Board of Mental Health.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 2: Organization

Rule 2.1 Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE)

A. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH), Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) is responsible for the development and implementation of DMH professional credentialing programs.

B. Major duties of the Division include (but are not limited to):

1. Promulgates standards and requirements pertaining to DMH professional credentialing;
2. Administers DMH professional credentialing programs;
3. Processes applications for DMH professional credentialing and related forms, paperwork and fees;
4. Assists the public with information pertaining to DMH professional credentialing;
5. Maintains a registry of individuals holding a DMH professional credential and provides verification of DMH professional credentials, as appropriate;
6. Regulates the use of DMH professional credentialing titles; and,
7. Facilitates Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board meetings and related matters.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 2.2 PLACE Review Board

A. The PLACE Review Board's composition and appointment structure is as follows:

1. The Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board is comprised of seven members.
2. The term of office is five years; Review Board members may hold consecutive terms.
3. Appointments are made by the DMH Executive Director. Attempts are made to ensure adequate representation among disciplines and programmatic types.
4. Review Board members must hold a DMH professional credential in good standing, and at least one Review Board member must also be a DMH Central Office staff representative.
5. A Chairperson is chosen by the Review Board from among its members. The Chairperson's term of office is one year. Other Review Board member functions and responsibilities may be assigned by the Review Board or Division, as needed.

B. The PLACE Review Board's purpose and powers are as follows:

1. The Review Board reviews applications for DMH professional credentialing and makes recommendations to the DMH Executive Director regarding the awarding of certification.
2. The Review Board has the authority to deny applications for DMH professional credentialing ~~certification~~; hold applications pending the submission of additional information; investigate complaints; conduct disciplinary hearings; and impose sanctions, if necessary.
3. In conjunction with the Division of PLACE, the Review Board receives and renders decisions regarding special requests pertaining to DMH professional credentialing. The Review Board may stipulate that special request claims be notarized and require supporting evidence to substantiate the request.
4. Review Board decisions regarding either the denial of professional certification/licensure or disciplinary action may be appealed.
5. The Review Board assists the Division of PLACE in developing applicable DMH professional credentialing standards and requirements and engages in continued study of best practices pertaining to DMH professional credentialing with a view of improving standards as needed.
6. The Review Board will exercise such powers pertaining to DMH professional credentialing, as provided for in this document.
7. The Review Board, in conjunction with the Division of PLACE, may periodically develop and promulgate additional professional standards and requirements and administrative policies and procedures (to work in concert with this document) as it deems necessary for the execution and enforcement of applicable state law and this *Standards & Requirements* document.
8. Review Board members are individually exempt from civil liability as a result of any action taken by the Review Board.
9. General submissions/requests to the Review Board should be submitted to the PLACE Review Board in writing c/o the Mississippi Department of Mental Health,

Division of PLACE (or via email to the Division of PLACE)~~; contact information is located inside the document cover~~.

C. The PLACE Review Board meetings shall be conducted in the following manner:

1. Review Board meetings are held at least quarterly at a time and place determined by the Review Board, and at such other times as requested by the Division. Meetings may be called by the Division or Chairperson with 10 days advance notice. The 10-day notice requirement may be waived by agreement of a majority of the Review Board.
2. Meeting quorum is a majority of the Review Board members present. If quorum is not present, the meeting will be adjourned until a date designated by the Chairperson or Division of PLACE staff.
3. The Review Board only reviews complete applications.
4. A Review Board meeting calendar, along with corresponding application deadlines, will be posted on the agency (DMH) website and will be provided to state mental health system program Staff Development Officers (SDOs) on an annual basis.
5. The Division reserves the right to cancel or reschedule Review Board meetings without prior notice.

D. PLACE ~~removal of~~ Review Board members may be removed from office for the following reasons:

1. A Review Board member may be removed from office if found to be in violation of any of the standards contained in this document.
2. A Review Board member may be removed from office if his/her certification or licensure is no longer in good standing.
3. A Review Board member must be disqualified from any business on which he/she may not make an objective evaluation or decision.
4. A Review Board member subject to disciplinary action, as defined in this document, must disqualify himself/herself from any business until the complaint is resolved.
5. Action by either the DMH Executive Director or a majority of the Review Board members, with Executive Director approval, is necessary to remove a Review Board member from office.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 2.3 DMH Executive Director

A. The DMH Executive Director, or designee, reviews and approves/disapproves Review Board recommendations to award DMH professional credentials to individual applicants.

B. The DMH Executive Director, or designee, reviews and makes decisions regarding Review Board actions relating to the denial of a DMH professional credential (if appealed by the applicant/~~certified~~ credentialed individual) and/or the imposition of sanctions (if appealed by the ~~certified~~ credentialed individual).

C. The DMH Executive Director, or designee, reserves the right to amend or repeal any standard or requirement contained in this document (or adopt a new standard or requirement), with appropriate prior notice. In this event, the DMH Division of PLACE will send notification of the directed change(s) to the last known address of each registered DMH-credentialed individual. The promulgated change(s) will be effective whether received by the person entitled to notice or not. Notice will also be given to state mental health system program directors or staff development officers. Change(s) made under this provision will be incorporated into the existing *Standards & Requirements* document in a timely manner.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 2.4 State Board of Mental Health

A. During the administrative appeal process, an applicant/~~certified~~ credentialed individual may appeal the decision of the DMH Executive Director to the State Board of Mental Health.

B. During the disciplinary appeal process, a ~~certified~~ credentialed individual may appeal the decision of the DMH Executive Director to the State Board of Mental Health.

C. The State Board of Mental Health, as the authorized entity under applicable state law to promulgate state mental health system credentialing programs, reserves the right to amend or repeal any standard or requirement contained within this document (or adopt a new standard or requirement) without prior notice. In this event, the DMH Division of PLACE will send notification of the directed change(s) to the last known address of each registered DMH-credentialed individual. The promulgated change(s) will be effective whether received by the person entitled to notification or not. Notice will also be given to state mental health system program directors or staff development officers. Change(s) made under this provision will be incorporated into the existing *Standards & Requirements* document in a timely manner.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 3: Certification Requirements

Rule 3.1 Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Requirements ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS

A. In order to be eligible to apply for the **DMH Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist** credential **(~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS)**, **an individual must meet ALL of the requirements listed below**:

1. Employment Requirement;

2. Education Requirement;

3. Ethics Requirement; AND,

4. Criminal Background Checks Requirement.

B. The Employment, Education, Ethics and Criminal Background Checks requirements are outlined in the "Certification Requirements - Categories and Descriptions" section of this chapter.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 3.2 ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS Upgrade Requirements

A. Once an individual is awarded the DMH Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credential (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS), he/she must complete the following two (2) requirements in order to upgrade to full certification as a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS:

1. Experience Requirement; AND,

2. Exam/Training Requirement.

B. The Experience and Exam/Training requirements are outlined in the "Certification Requirements - Categories and Descriptions" section of this chapter.

C. **A ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS must complete these upgrade requirements by the end of his/her two-year Provisional Certification Period.** ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS upgrade timelines are covered in Chapter Six.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 3.3 Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Requirements ~~CCMP~~ CCSS

A. Individuals eligible to apply for the **DMH Certified Community Support Specialist** credential **(CCSS)** are as follows:

1. PCCSSs who have successfully completed all upgrade requirements listed above by the end of their two-year Provisional Certification Period may apply to upgrade to full certification (CCSS) on or before their prescribed deadline, as outlined in Chapter Six. *(This is considered an upgrade application for CCSS.)*

2. **~~NOTICE:~~** Individuals initially meeting the requirements for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS, as outlined in this chapter, should apply directly for this level of credential, thereby skipping provisional certification (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS). *(This is considered an initial application for CCSS.)* Otherwise, an individual applies for ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS and then later, once upgrade requirements are met, applies for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS.

B. In order to be eligible to apply for the **DMH Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist** credential **(~~CCMP~~ CCSS)**, **an individual must meet ALL of the requirements listed below**:

1. Employment Requirement;

2. Education Requirement;

3. Ethics Requirement;

4. Criminal Background Checks Requirement;

5. Experience Requirement; AND,

6. Exam/Training Requirement.

C. The Employment, Education, Ethics, Criminal Background Checks, Experience and Exam/Training requirements are outlined in the "Certification Requirements - Categories and Descriptions" section of this chapter.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 3.4 Certification Requirements – Categories and Descriptions

A. **Employment Requirement**

1. The applicant must be currently employed at a Mississippi "state mental health system" program, as defined in Chapter One.

2. Initial ~~the~~ applicants must have responsibility for providing (or supervising) ~~case management~~ community support or Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) Waiver support coordination services. *Upgrade applicants are exempt from this specific employment requirement.*

3. Employment refers to paid, not volunteer, work.

B. **Education Requirement**

1. The applicant must have at least a Bachelor's degree in a mental health-, intellectual/developmental disabilities- or human services/behavioral health-related field. *(If submitting a Master's degree or higher, the relevant degree must be comprised of a minimum of 30 semester hours or its equivalent.)* The degree must be from an approved educational institution (as determined by DMH).

2. The following are examples of degree types which may be ~~are~~ considered appropriate for the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credential; this is not an exhaustive list:

    a. Counseling/Guidance,
    b. Social Work,
    c. Education,
    d. Special Education,
    e. Psychology,
    f. Family and Consumer Studies,
    g. Child and Family Studies,
    h. Recreation/Leisure Studies,
    i. Nursing,
    j. Marriage and Family Studies,
    k. Rehabilitative Services/Vocational Rehabilitation,
    l. Human Developmental Psychology,
    m. Gerontology,
    n. Early Childhood Development,
    o. Sociology,
    p. Criminal Justice, and
    q. Other mental health-, behavioral health-, and/or intellectual disability-related ~~fields~~ degree types, as determined by the PLACE Review Board.

3. **For applicants with atypical degrees:** If the applicant's Bachelor's degree type is not listed above, successful completion of at least five (5) courses from the following areas will be considered:

    a. psychology,
    b. early childhood development,
    c. chemical dependency studies,
    d. sociology,
    e. abnormal psychology,
    f. gerontology,
    g. developmental psychology,
    h. communications,
    i. child and/or adolescent psychology,
    j. social welfare,
    k. human growth and development,
    l. human behavior,
    m. professional ethics, ~~and/or~~
    n. cultural sensitivity and/or,
    o. other mental health-, behavioral health-, and/or intellectual disability-related courses, as determined by the PLACE Review Board.

        i. All or part of these courses may either be completed as part of the degree program of study or completed outside of (as add-on courses

to) the degree program of study (i.e., without earning an additional degree). **The requirement to hold a Bachelor's degree is not waived.** Courses under this provision must be at least three (3) semester hours or the equivalent and must have been successfully completed (i.e., a passing score was earned).

ii. Courses completed by applicants which are not part of the degree program of study will be evaluated during application review to determine applicability; only degrees/courses completed at an approved educational institution (as determined by DMH) are considered.

4. Evidence of successful degree/course completion will be designated on the official submitted transcript(s), as part of the application packet. The PLACE Review Board may also request course catalog descriptions or other documentation to verify successful course completion and/or that the education requirement has been met.

5. PCCSSs who are applying to upgrade to CCSS would have already met the above-listed education requirement (and produced the required verification of such) at the time of provisional application. Therefore, an applicant who is ~~if you are~~ applying to upgrade from ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS to ~~CCMP~~ CCSS does not need to submit a new official transcript ~~is not necessary~~ with his/her upgrade application packet. However, ~~if you are~~ an applicant who is applying directly for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS, (skipping ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS), must submit an official transcript ~~is required~~ as part of the application process.

C. **Experience Requirement**

1. ~~This~~ The experience requirement is **only applicable to individuals applying for full certification - ~~CCMP~~ CCSS.**

2. There is **no work experience requirement** to apply for **provisional** certification.

3. **For individuals applying for full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS),** a minimum of one full year (12 months or its full-time equivalent) of supervised ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination experience at a Mississippi state mental health system program is required. This experience may either be the provision or supervision of ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination services.

4. The experience requirement is based on a full-time 40-hour work week; individuals with part-time experience must report an amount of experience which is equivalent to a 40-hour work week; the Review Board will make decisions regarding part-time work on a case-by-case basis.

5. Employment refers to paid, not volunteer work.

6. The designated state mental health system program Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services or Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination *(as appropriate)* ~~at a state mental health system program~~, as defined in the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers (DMH Operational Standards),* ~~should~~ must verify the submitted work experience.

7. *~~At his/her discretion, the~~ A state mental health system program executive director may contact the Division to make a request to designate an additional master's level program employee to verify the required ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination experience in the event that either the Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services or the Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination is not available. The designee must possess educational, experience and credentialing qualifications commensurate with the qualifications for Directors of Community Support Services and Directors of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination, as outlined in the DMH Operational Standards. A request of this nature is subject to Division and/or Review Board approval.*

8. All submitted work experience must be submitted on the appropriate form prescribed by the Division as part of the application packet.

D. **Exam/Training Requirement**

1. **This requirement is only applicable to individuals applying for full certification - ~~CCMP~~ CCSS.**

2. There are two (2) options to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement for full certification; **the individual must have completed only ONE of these two options:**

   a. **~~Option Two~~ Option One - Web-based Training Component:**

      i. Successful completion of a ~~case management-related~~ web-based training component, specific to either community support service provision or ID/DD Waiver support coordination service provision, as appropriate for the population served, as prescribed by DMH. *Individuals completing the web-based training component should access the correct course list for their discipline (community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination).*

      ii. The web-based training component is a customized collection of e-learning courses (and corresponding exams) designed to address basic knowledge and practical information pertinent to ~~a case manager~~ community support specialists *(and ID/DD Waiver support coordinators)* in the state mental heath system. DMH establishes the specific content.

iii. Course selections are subject to periodic update without prior notice.

iv. At the time of provisional certification award, individuals will receive general information on the web-based training component as well as registration information. Web-based training component information will also be maintained on the agency (DMH) website.

v. Applicants may complete the web-based training component prior to initial application as long as: 1) the correct courses, as prescribed by DMH, are taken (courses are subject to change without prior notice); 2) all courses are successfully completed; 3) the appropriate documentation, as prescribed by the Division, is submitted with the initial application to illustrate successful completion; and, 4) the courses were completed within two (2) years from the date of receipt of the initial application, as determined by the Division's records.

vi. Participants will comply with the rules of the web-based training process, as prescribed by the web-based training administrator.

vii. DMH may prescribe appropriate, non-excessive fees for the web-based training to cover administrative costs; these fees are subject to change.

viii. Proficiency for successful completion will be 80% for each individual exam in the customized collection of courses *(and/or as established by the web-based training administrator); as web-based training updates occur, the designated proficiency level, as prescribed by the web-based training administrator, may be subject to change.*

ix. Individuals who complete the web-based training component through ~~another~~ a venue other than DMH may be able to count it to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement; ~~in this instance, the individual must provide satisfactory proof of successful completion~~ as long as: 1) the correct courses, as prescribed by DMH, are taken (courses are subject to change without prior notice); 2) all courses are successfully completed; 3) the appropriate documentation, as prescribed by the Division, is submitted to illustrate successful completion; and, 4), the courses were completed within the appropriate time frame as prescribed by DMH; this situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis and is subject to Review Board approval.

x. ~~If utilizing this option, no documentation is necessary to show proof of completion; the Division of PLACE maintains this documentation.~~ Each individual completing the web-based training component, whether through DMH or an outside venue, will be required to submit documentation attesting to the fact that the entire web-based training component was completed by him/her. This documentation must

illustrate successful completion of the entire web-based training component AND must be submitted in the appropriate format prescribed by the Division as part of the CCSS application packet.

b. ~~**Option One**~~ **Option Two - DMH Case Management Orientation:**

i. Successful completion of DMH Case Management Orientation, a ~~case management~~ training and exam previously offered through DMH. Individuals who ~~have~~ successfully completed DMH Case Management Orientation prior to its discontinuance may count it to fulfill the Exam/Training requirement.

ii. Individuals utilizing this option must provide acceptable documentation to show proof of successful completion. It is the individual's responsibility to provide this proof at the time of ~~CCMP~~ CCSS application.

3. Any individual who completes the exam/training component in a fraudulent manner will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including loss of any DMH professional credential held and/or rejection of application for DMH professional credentialing.

E. **Ethics Requirement**

1. All applicants must read and abide by the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct* located in Chapter Nine.

2. It is the applicant's responsibility to read these principles before signing and submitting the application. The applicant should keep a reference copy.

3. Applicants must inform the Division of PLACE of any previous or pending disciplinary action against them by any professional credentialing body or association. Applicants who have had any past or currently held DMH professional credential or any other professional credential be the subject of any disciplinary action must notify the Division of PLACE during the application process. At a minimum, this notification must be provided in the appropriate space on the application form. DMH may delay action on the application until the matter has been resolved and verified to the satisfaction of DMH and/or the PLACE Review Board.

F. **Criminal Background Checks**

1. As part of the application process, the Division of PLACE ensures that state mental health system employers have conducted fingerprinting and criminal records background checks on individuals applying for DMH professional credentials.

2. No one will be credentialed without proof of criminal background checks.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 4: Application Procedures

Rule 4.1 ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS (Provisional Certification) Application Packet

To apply for **temporary certification as a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS**, an individual should submit an **application packet** which contains the following:

A. ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS Application Form;

B. ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS Verification of Employment Form;

C. Official Transcript; and,

D. Application Fee - $30.00 fee, payable by check or money order to the "Mississippi Department of Mental Health."

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 4.2 ~~CCMP~~ CCSS (Full Certification) Application Packet

To apply for **full certification as a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS**, an individual should submit an **application packet** *(initial or upgrade)* which, **at a minimum**, contains the following:

A. ~~CCMP~~ CCSS Application Form;

B. ~~CCMP~~ CCSS Verification of Employment Form; ~~and,~~

C. ~~CCMP~~ CCSS Verification of Work Experience Form; and,

D. Either the Web-based Training Record OR the DMH Case Management Orientation Certificate/Record, (as ~~if~~ applicable).

1. *Exam/Training Option One – Web-based Training Component:* A CCSS applicant who completed the web-based training component to satisfy the Exam/Training Requirement for CCSS must include a signed copy of his/her web-based training learner transcript in the CCSS application packet.

    a. The learner transcript, containing the CCSS applicant's original signature, must be signed in **blue** ink, attesting to the fact that the entire web-based training component was completed by the applicant. The learner transcript must be submitted in the appropriate format, as prescribed by the Division.

b. The submitted learner transcript must contain the course names and corresponding dates of completion for each course in the web-based training component, as well as the total number of course hours completed.

c. This documentation must be submitted whether the web-based training was completed through DMH or through an outside venue. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

2. *Exam/Training Option Two – DMH Case Management Orientation:* If the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS applicant is utilizing DMH Case Management Orientation to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement, a copy of the certificate/record documenting successful completion must be included in the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS application packet. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

E. **~~Depending on the~~ If the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS applicant~~'s~~ ~~situation~~ is submitting an initial (not upgrade) application,** the following **additional** ~~CCMP~~ CCSS application component(s) ~~may also be~~ are also required:

1. Official Transcript – *(If upgrading from ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS, no additional transcript is required.)*
2. Application Fee - $30.00 fee, payable by check or money order to the "Mississippi Department of Mental Health." *(If upgrading from ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS, no application fee is required.)* Only individuals applying directly for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS pay the application fee. **This is a ONE TIME fee; applicants should ~~do~~ not pay the application fee twice**.

~~***Web-based Training Record (if applicable)*** - If the CCMP applicant is utilizing the web-based training component to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement and he/she completed this training through DMH, no documentation is necessary; the Division maintains this information. *However, individuals who complete the web-based training component through a venue other than DMH may be able to count it to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement; in this instance, the individual must provide satisfactory proof of successful completion, which is subject to Review Board Approval.*~~

F. **Application Forms are located online at the agency (DMH) website, as an addendum to this document.** *Individuals needing a print copy should contact the Division.* ~~**www.dmh.ms.gov**~~

~~***Before completing the Application Forms and submitting your application packet, read all Application Directions below as well as the instructions on each Application Form.***~~

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 4.3 General Application Guidelines

A. **General Directions**

1. Applicants should read all directions and application materials before beginning the application process. Each application form has specific directions which must be followed.

2. Certain application forms must bear original signatures, as indicated on the form. Copies or faxes are not accepted.

3. With the exception of the official transcript, all application materials must be submitted together in one application packet.

4. The official transcript must be submitted in a sealed college/university envelope. If, however, the applicant chooses to submit his/her official transcript(s) in an electronic format, it is the applicant's responsibility to have the college/university submit, along with the electronic transcript, sufficient documentation to verify that the electronic transcript is an official copy; accordingly, such documentation will be subject to Division of PLACE and PLACE Review Board approval.

5. The responsibility for official transcript submission is the applicant's. The Division of PLACE does not communicate with the college/university on the applicant's behalf.

6. The submitted official transcript(s) ~~and~~ must document that the education requirement has been met.

7. The official transcript must document that the required degree has been awarded or conferred, including the date of degree award. Letters from the college/university indicating that an individual has met the requirements to complete a degree are not acceptable.

8. The official transcript can either be included in the application packet or sent to the DMH Division of PLACE directly from the college/university. This is the only application piece which may be submitted separately.

9. All submission deadlines reflect the date received by the DMH Division of PLACE, not postmarked dates.

10. The PLACE Review Board only considers complete applications; all application deficiencies must be resolved. Each scheduled Review Board meeting has a corresponding deadline date by which complete application materials must be received. Review Board meetings may be cancelled without prior notice.

11. Only forms prescribed by the Division of PLACE may be utilized to apply for certification.

12. Application forms may be changed without prior notice. The most current version should be utilized.

13. Once submitted, all application materials become the property of DMH. Application materials will not be returned; the applicant should keep a copy of the application materials, except those under seal. Superfluous or unnecessary application materials will be destroyed.

B. **Application Time Limits**

1. Initial applications will remain open for two years from date of receipt. During that time, applicants have the opportunity to rectify any deficiencies.

2. Following two years from the date of receipt, incomplete applications *(initial and upgrade)*, applications containing unresolved deficiencies *(initial and upgrade)*, and applications which did not result in a credential being awarded *(initial and upgrade)* will no longer be maintained by the Division. (~~including unresolved applications held pending by the Review Board for additional information), will be held for two years from the date of receipt; after two years, these applications will be void and destroyed~~.

3. Additional timelines pertaining to upgrade and renewal applications are covered more fully in the relevant sections of this document.

4. When a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS needs to upgrade to full certification, he/she must submit a new application for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS; no new application fee is required.

5. The upgrade application may be submitted as soon as the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS meets the requirements to upgrade, but the absolute deadline to submit an upgrade application is the last working day of the month following the ~~PCCMP's~~ PCCSS's expiration date. (The ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS expiration date is located on the ~~PCCMP's~~ PCCSS's initial credential award letter and on the ~~PCCMP's~~ PCCSS's issued certificate.) For example, if a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential expires in October of a given year, the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS upgrade application must be received by the Division by the last working day of November of that same year.

6. If a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS has not met the requirements to upgrade and wants to continue in the program, he/she must submit an extension request to the PLACE Review Board by the same time frame as the upgrade application would be due. Extension approval is at the discretion of the Review Board. Additional information on extensions, including how to request an extension, is covered in Chapter Nine.

7. Failure to submit the upgrade application (or an extension request) by the prescribed deadline results in automatic default from the program. ~~PCCMPs~~ PCCSSs are expected to keep track of the date by which they must upgrade.

8. Incomplete portions/problems associated with the submitted upgrade application should be resolved as soon as possible but no later than 45 calendar days from the PCCSS's prescribed upgrade application deadline, as outlined above. If all upgrade application deficiencies are not resolved within this time frame, the individual's provisional credential will automatically default effective per his/her provisional expiration date. (Additional information pertaining to PCCSS Upgrade Timelines is covered in Chapter Six.)

C. **Official Transcript**

1. Only official transcript(s) which show that the education requirement has been met are necessary.

2. All references to college credit hours are for semester hours. Quarter hours submitted will be converted to semester hours using the standard formula (Number of Quarter Hours X .66 = Semester Hour Equivalent).

3. All references to graduate degrees require at least 30 semester hours (or equivalent).

4. Degrees/coursework must be completed at an approved educational institution.

5. Official transcripts submitted to show proof of degree completion must illustrate that the degree has been awarded/conferred.

6. If the applicant holds another DMH professional credential and has already submitted an official transcript to the DMH Division of PLACE which would illustrate that the education requirement has been met, he/she should note this information on the application form. As long as the Division of PLACE still has this information on file, a new transcript is not necessary.

7. An applicant who is applying to upgrade from PCCSS to CCSS does not need to submit a new copy of the official transcript with his/her upgrade application packet. However, an applicant who is applying directly for CCSS (skipping PCCSS) must submit an official relevant transcript as part of the application process.

D. **Verification of Employment/Criminal Background Checks**

1. The required form to verify an applicant's state mental health system employment includes a Background Check section. Personnel Officers must indicate whether or not criminal background checks (to include fingerprinting) have been conducted for each applicant, as appropriate to the applicant's position and professional responsibilities.

2. The form will not be accepted unless the Background Check section is satisfactorily completed – no exceptions.

3. With specific areas of interest being conviction of a crime or conviction of a felony relating to the abuse or mistreatment of other individuals, the verification of background checks (to include fingerprinting) should include: Convictions under the Vulnerable Adults Act; Child Abuse Registry; Sex Offense Record; Criminal Record; Motor Vehicle Registry; and, others, as appropriate to the applicant's position and professional responsibilities.

4. The Verification of Employment Form must clearly show that the individual is currently employed at a Mississippi state mental health system program. If an applicant is unsure if he/she works at a program meeting the "state mental health system" definition, as outlined in this document, he/she should consult with the program's personnel office.

E. **Verification of Work Experience**

1. ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS applications do not include documentation of completed work experience.

2. ~~CCMP~~ CCSS applicants must document appropriate work experience.

3. The prescribed form must be completed by the designated state mental health system Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services or Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination, as appropriate. A record of each designated "Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services" and "Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination" is maintained by the Division of PLACE. *At his/her discretion, the state mental health system program executive director may contact the DMH Division of PLACE and make a request to designate an additional master's level program employee to verify the required ~~case management~~ experience, in the event that the Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services or the Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination is not available.*

4. A ~~the~~ Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services *(or Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination)* is not permitted to complete his/her own Verification of Experience Form. In this instance, the program executive director (or other master's level program employee designated by the program executive director *(and approved by the DMH Division of PLACE)* to verify ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination experience) may verify the work experience.

5. A qualified supervisor should not be a member of the individual's immediate family.

6. ~~CCMPs~~ CCSSs only need to report one year of full-time relevant work experience; a lifetime of work experience is not necessary.

7. Volunteer work does not count.

8. If relevant work experience is accrued under more than one supervisor, a separate Verification of Experience Form must be submitted for each position.

9. Due to the confidential nature of the submitted Verification of Experience Form, information completed by the supervisor will not be shared with the applicant – no exceptions.

F. **Verification of Exam/Training Requirement**

1. *Exam/Training Option One – Web-based Training Component:* A CCSS applicant who completed the web-based training component to satisfy the Exam/Training Requirement for CCSS must include a signed copy of his/her web-based training learner transcript in the CCSS application packet.

   a. The learner transcript, containing the CCSS applicant's original signature, must be signed in **blue** ink, attesting to the fact that the entire web-based training component was completed by the applicant. The learner transcript must be submitted in the appropriate format, as prescribed by the Division.

   b. The submitted learner transcript must contain the course names and corresponding dates of completion for each course in the web-based training component, as well as the total number of course hours completed.

   c. This documentation must be submitted whether the web-based training was completed through DMH or through an outside venue. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

2. *Exam/Training Option Two – DMH Case Management Orientation:* If the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS applicant is utilizing DMH Case Management Orientation to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement, a copy of the certificate/record documenting successful completion must be included in the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS application packet. Submission of this information is the applicant's responsibility.

~~***Web-based Training Record (if applicable)*** - If the CCMP applicant is utilizing the web-based training component to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement and he/she completed this training through DMH, no documentation is necessary; the Division maintains this information. *(Individuals who complete the web-based training component through a venue other than DMH may be able to count it to satisfy the Exam/Training requirement; in this instance, the individual must provide satisfactory proof of successful completion, which is subject to Review Board Approval.)*~~

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 5: Certification Phases

Rule 5.1 Application Phase

A. The steps to the application phase are as follows:

1. Individual submits a complete application packet.

2. The Division of PLACE reviews application packets for completeness.

3. Within prescribed timelines, applicants are ~~notified of any deficiencies and~~ given an opportunity to correct ~~the~~ any application problem(s).

4. As a courtesy, the Division may notify applicants and/or their program Staff Development Officers (SDOs) of application problems/deficiencies; while such courtesy notification may be made, the Division does not guarantee such notification. Rather, it is the applicant's responsibility to submit a complete application and to keep track of and address any application deficiencies/problems.

5. Complete applications are forwarded to the PLACE Review Board. An application is considered to be complete when all required application forms and materials, including the relevant official transcript(s) and the required application fee, have been received by the DMH Division of PLACE in the proper format; the application must contain no deficiencies.

6. The Review Board reviews all applications, evaluates materials against established criteria and makes recommendations to the DMH Executive Director. Applicants are notified in writing if more information is needed.

7. Each regularly-scheduled PLACE Review Board meeting has a corresponding deadline for receipt of complete application materials.

8. Review Board meetings may be cancelled without prior notice.

9. A Review Board meeting calendar will be posted on the agency (DMH) website and provided to state mental health system program Staff Development Officers (SDOs) on an annual basis.

~~***To obtain a copy of the PLACE Review Board meeting calendar, visit the DMH website, contact the Division of PLACE or contact your program SDO.***~~

10. The Executive Director reviews the PLACE Review Board recommendations and approves or disapproves each application for professional credentialing.

B. Each applicant is subsequently notified in writing of the status of his/her application. The possible outcomes are:

1. *Approval* - Individual is awarded the credential.
2. *Hold Pending* - The Review Board may request additional information from the applicant before rendering a decision/recommendation.
3. *Denial* - The Review Board may deny initial, upgrade, or renewal applications for credentialing for the following reasons, including, but not limited to: failure to meet credentialing requirements; failure to meet prescribed credentialing timelines; lack of appropriate employment; failure to pay required fees; lack of appropriate educational degrees/coursework; lack of appropriate experience; failure to complete successfully upgrade requirements; failure to acquire necessary continuing education hours; unacceptable practice of the applicant; violation of these standards and requirements and/or any rules or regulations established by DMH and/or the PLACE Review Board; violation of the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct*; conviction of a crime which is a felony under federal or state law; and/or, declaration of mental incompetence by the court. Previous or pending revocation or disciplinary action by any professional credentialing body may also result in delay or denial of application for DMH professional credentialing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

5.2 Certification Phase

A. **Provisional Certification (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS)**

1. Once credentialed, the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS will receive a credential award letter, followed by a temporary, provisional certificate. The credential award letter will outline:

    a. The length of Provisional Certification, including the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS expiration date; Provisional certification is not renewable.
    b. The requirements the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS must complete in order to upgrade to full certification; these requirements are outlined in Chapter Three.

2. Individuals who have been awarded provisional certification are expected to abide by the professional responsibility provisions in Chapter Nine.

B. **Full Certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS)**

1. Once credentialed, the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS will receive a credential award letter, followed by a full certificate. The credential award letter will outline:

    a. The length of certification, including the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS expiration date; the ~~CCMP's~~ CCSS's expiration date is made to coincide with the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist four-year renewal deadline. ~~CCMPs~~ CCSSs renew every four years by the renewal deadline. Full certification timelines are addressed in Chapter Six.

b. The ~~CCMP~~ CCSS renewal requirements; renewal requirements are outlined in Chapter Seven.

2. Individuals who have been awarded full certification are expected to abide by the professional responsibility provisions in Chapter Nine.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 5.3 Certificate Issuance

A. **Professional Identification**

1. Individuals who make successful application for provisional certification will be awarded a time-limited, provisional certificate attesting to the title of "Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist" (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS).

2. Individuals who make successful application for certification will be awarded a full certificate attesting to the title of "Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist" (~~CCMP~~ CCSS). ~~CCMP~~ CCSS is renewable every four years.

B. **Date of Issuance**

1. The credentialing date of issuance for **initial** applications will be the applicant's date of hire, as reported by the state mental health system employer on DMH-prescribed application forms. *(The employer must only report a single date of hire.)* In order to receive this date of issuance, the initial application must be **received** by the DMH Division of PLACE **within 30 calendar days of the reported date of hire, and the application must be complete.** *(The employer-reported date of hire will be counted as Day One.)*

2. "Initial application," as referenced in this document, refers to provisional applications and applications submitted directly for full certification (thereby bypassing provisional certification), not upgrade applications.

3. Any applicant whose **complete** initial application is not received by the DMH Division of PLACE within the 30-day time frame referenced above will receive as the credential date of issuance the PLACE Review Board meeting date at which the initial application was recommended for approval.

4. All **upgrade** applicants (i.e., provisionally-certified individuals applying for upgrade to full certification) will have as their credential date of issuance the PLACE Review Board meeting date at which the upgrade application was recommended for approval.

5. Provisional certification period extensions will not automatically be granted due to variations in dates of issuance.

C. **Certificates**

1. Wall certificates issued by the DMH remain the property of DMH and must be surrendered upon request.

2. DMH intends that each individual hold only one certificate per professional title. DMH does not provide multiple original wall certificates.

3. Certificates issued by the DMH reflecting credentialing as a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS are valid for up to a maximum two-year (24 consecutive months) Provisional Certification Period. The issuance and expiration dates are printed on the certificate. **Dates of provisional issuance and expiration vary from person to person.**

4. An individual's provisional certificate automatically becomes invalid once he/she has successfully upgraded to full certification; the individual will receive a new certificate as a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS.

5. Certificates issued by DMH reflecting credentialing as a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS are valid for a maximum four–year Certification Period established by the Division. The issuance date is indicated on the certificate. Full certification timelines are addressed in Chapter Six. Full certificates are renewable.

6. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential who are currently practicing in the state mental health system should maintain a copy of proof of certification in their personnel file.

7. Upon separation from state mental health system employment, the credentialed individual should notify the Division accordingly, as outlined in Chapter Nine. Unless the separating individual is reemployed with another state mental health system program or requests and receives an appropriate credential status change, the certificate is invalid.

D. **Replacement Certificates**

1. Only individuals in good standing who are currently employed in the state mental health system (or in Inactive Status) may request a replacement certificate.

2. Upon written (or email) request, an individual may be allowed one replacement certificate at no charge for any of the following reasons:

    a. Printing Error;
    b. Damaged/Destroyed;
    c. Lost;

d. Never received; or,
e. Legal Name Change. ~~—(~~
   i. If the request is due to a legal name change, along with the request, the individual should submit a copy of legal documentation of the name change. The request should indicate the new name as it should appear on the replacement certificate.
   ii. Name changes reported at the time of ~~a new~~ an upgrade application do not have to be accompanied by a request or a copy of the legal documentation~~.)~~; this exemption does not apply to renewal applications.

3. If an individual makes more than one request for a replacement certificate, the Division reserves the right to impose the certificate replacement fee.

4. Once the new replacement certificate is issued, the previous certificate immediately becomes invalid. Possession and utilization of two certificates for fraudulent purposes is grounds for disciplinary action, including possible loss of credentialing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 5.4 Administrative Appeal

A. The terms of administrative appeal are only applicable to the application process.

B. An applicant aggrieved by a decision regarding the initial, upgrade or renewal application for professional ~~certification~~ credentialing has the right to appeal to the DMH Executive Director.

C. The applicant must notify the Division and ~~provide~~ submit the written notice of appeal (along with any supplemental application information) within 30 calendar days of the mailing of the application review results.

D. The DMH Executive Director will review the application and supplemental information, if provided, and notify the applicant of the results of this review within 30 days.

E. An applicant aggrieved by the DMH Executive Director's final decision may then appeal to the State Board of Mental Health. Appeals to the State Board of Mental Health must be made within 30 calendar days of the mailing of the DMH Executive Director's final decision. The appeal must be made and conducted in accordance with established Board policy.

F. All submitted appeals must be clearly marked "Notice of Appeal" in bold-faced type, specifically stating that the notice is an appeal.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 6: Certification Timelines

Rule 6.1 ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS Certification – Upgrade Information and Timelines

A. The ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential is a temporary, nonrenewable certification. It is valid for up to two years or 24 consecutive months from the date of issuance. This two-year period is referred to as the ~~PCCMP's~~ PCCSS's "Provisional Certification Period."

B. The Provisional Certification Period begins on the day the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential is issued and lasts for a maximum of up to two years or 24 consecutive months.

C. Once an individual is awarded the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential, he/she will receive notification of the credentialing award, along with upgrade instructions. (*The upgrade instructions will include registration information for the ~~case management-related~~ web-based training component as covered in Chapter Three).*

D. ~~DURING~~ By the end of the 24-month Provisional Certification Period, a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS must complete ALL requirements to upgrade to full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS). Upgrade Requirements are covered in Chapter Three.

E. It is the ~~PCCMP's~~ PCCSS's responsibility to complete all upgrade requirements.

F. ~~PCCMPs~~ PCCSSs who complete the upgrade requirements may upgrade to full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS**) prior to** the end of the two-year Provisional Certification Period.

G. A ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS who does not complete all requirements to upgrade to full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS) by the end of his/her ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS expiration date will default from the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program. Default means the credential is expired, and the individual no longer holds the credential.

H. In rare and extenuating circumstances, the PLACE Review Board may grant an extension of an individual's Provisional Certification Period. Information on extensions, including how to request an extension, is covered in Chapter Nine.

I. ***~~NOTICE:~~*** **Individuals upgrading from ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS to ~~CCMP~~ CCSS must submit an application for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS. Upgrade from ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS to ~~CCMP~~ CCSS is not an automatic process initiated by the Division of PLACE.**

J. **A ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS should submit a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS application packet as soon as all upgrade requirements are met, but no later than the last working day of the month following the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS expiration date.** For example, if a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential expires in October of a given year, the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS upgrade application must be received by the Division by the last working day of November of that same year.

K. The ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS expiration date is located on both the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS award letter and the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS original certificate. It is the ~~PCCMP's~~ PCCSS's responsibility to keep

track of his/her ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS expiration date and corresponding ~~CCMP~~ CCSS upgrade application deadline.

L. The Division does not notify individuals when their ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential is expiring and the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS upgrade application is due.

M. Incomplete portions/problems associated with the submitted upgrade application should be resolved as soon as possible but no later than 45 calendar days from the PCCSS's prescribed upgrade application deadline, as outlined above. If all upgrade application deficiencies are not resolved within this time frame, the individual's provisional credential will automatically default effective per his/her provisional expiration date.

N. Unless an extension for more time has been granted, individuals who fail to submit a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS (upgrade) application within established timelines will be considered to have defaulted from the program, meaning their ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential is expired. **This will be an automatic action by the Division of PLACE; no default notification will be sent.**

O. Except in rare and extenuating circumstances, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Review Board, an individual may not hold provisional certification more than twice. *An exception to this rule may be when the individual's provisional certification expiration (default) occurred due to an individual's separation from state mental health system employment rather than a failure to meet upgrade requirements. The burden of proof falls on the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS.*

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 6.2 ~~CCMP~~ CCSS – Certification Length and Timelines

A. The ~~CCMP~~ CCSS (and ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II) credential is renewable, as long as renewal requirements are met.

B. The ~~CCMP's~~ CCSS's certification begins on the day the certification is issued. This date is located on both the credential award letter and the original ~~CCMP~~ CCSS certificate.

C. ~~CCMPs~~ CCSSs (and ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-IIs) are on a four-year certification cycle. Upon achieving full certification, a ~~CCMP's~~ CCSS's expiration date is made to coincide with the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist renewal deadline.

D. ~~CCMPs~~ CCSSs (and ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-IIs) interested in maintaining the credential renew every four years by the renewal deadline.

E. Specific renewal information is covered in Chapter Seven.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 7: Renewal

Rule 7.1 Renewal General Information

A. Renewal is only applicable to individuals holding full certification (~~CCMPs~~ CCSSs and ~~CCMPs~~ CCSS-IIs).

B. Provisionally-certified individuals (~~PCCMPs~~ PCCSSs) **DO NOT** renew.

C. Individuals holding ~~CCMP~~ CCSS and ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II are required to renew **every four (4) years** on a certification schedule established by the Division.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.2 Renewal Deadline

A. The renewal deadline is September 30th (or closest prior working day) of each four-year certification period.

B. Renewal deadlines will be every four years - ~~September 30, 2011~~, September 30, 2015, September 30, 2019, etc.~~**~~*(Prior to January 1, 2011, the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program was organized by two-year certification periods.)*

C. Qualified individuals will renew their ~~certification~~ credential on or before the established renewal deadline in order to maintain Current or Inactive Status.

D. Individuals who fail to renew by the established deadline will have their credential automatically changed to Lapsed Status. Lapsed Status means the credential is expired, and the individual no longer holds the credential.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.3 Renewal Requirements

A. **Employment Requirement**

1. Renewing individuals must either continue to be employed in the "state mental health system" or hold Inactive Status.

2. An individual who is no longer employed in the state mental health system at the time of renewal no longer meets the employment criteria for DMH professional credentialing. Unless the individual holds Inactive Status, he/she may make a request to change his/her certification status category. Certificate status information is located in Chapter Nine.

B. **Continuing Education (CE) Requirement**

1. **A minimum of ~~40~~ 60 successfully completed continuing education (CE) hours** (~~10~~ 15 hours per year) is required for renewal.

2. Continuing education hours or college course work counted for renewal must have been successfully completed **during the current four-year certification period**. Renewal periods run from October 1st to September 30th of the appropriate four-year cycle.

3. CEs earned outside of the current four-year certification period will not be counted; CEs may not be carried over from one renewal cycle to the next.

4. One continuing education hour is equal to ~~50 –~~ 60 consecutive minutes in an appropriate CE activity.

~~**Of the 40-hour CE renewal requirement, the following stipulations are included**~~:

5. ~~32~~ At least 52 of the ~~40~~ 60 required hours must be behavioral health-related; *(Individuals may count up to eight (8) of the 60 CE hours in non-behavioral health-related areas, such as technology or administrative types of training, which they or their programs deem important or necessary for continued professional enhancement.)*

6. Up to ~~12~~ 15 of the required ~~40~~ 60 hours may be obtained by presenting applicable (behavioral health-related) training events.

7. At least two (2) of the required ~~40~~ CE hours must be in the area of cultural competency.

8. At least two (2) of the required ~~40~~ CE hours must be in the area of ethics.

9. At least half of the required CE hours must be accrued through participation in live, face-to-face continuing education activities; thus, no more than half of the required CE hours may be earned through online or distance learning continuing education (CE) activities.

10. One three-semester hour (or equivalent) behavioral health-related college course from an approved educational institution, taken during the appropriate certification time period, will be ~~accepted to fulfill the entire~~ considered equal to 30 continuing education hours (CEs). ~~requirement~~

11. Courses claimed for continuing education hours must be beyond the course work necessary to meet the educational requirement for DMH professional credentialing.

12. **A special provision is available for individuals for whom it is their first renewal cycle; this provision is only applicable to the individual's first renewal cycle:**

    a. **During the individual's first renewal cycle only**, the CE renewal requirement may be prorated, if necessary. Individuals interested in proration should contact the Division well in advance of the renewal deadline for information and assistance.

    b. Generally, the proration of creditable CEs for renewing individuals for whom it is their first renewal cycle will be calculated on a scale as follows, ~~are required to report one behavioral health-related CE hour per month of credentialing~~, beginning with the renewing individual's month of full certification issuance, as determined by DMH's records, and ending with the renewal deadline month (September 30th): ~~*For example an individual who first obtained his/her CCMP credential in the month of January of a renewal year (which ends September 30th) would be required to report nine (9) CE hours.*~~

        i. *Six (6) months or less of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 7.5 behavioral health-related CE hours;

        ii. *Seven (7) months to 12 months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 15 behavioral health-related CE hours;

        iii. *13 months to 24 months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 30 behavioral health-related CE hours;

        iv. *25 months to 36 months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 45 behavioral health-related CE hours; and,

        v. *37 or more months of full certification:* a minimum requirement of 60 behavioral health-related CE hours *(which may be inclusive of the up to eight (8) non-behavioral health-related CE hour provision, as stipulated above).*

    c. Renewing individuals for whom it is their first renewal cycle must include, within their proration of behavioral health-related CEs, at least two (2) hours in the area of cultural competency and two (2) hours in the area of ethics, as outlined above.

    d. Issues related to CE proration not expressly covered in this provision will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Division.

    e. The renewal fee is not prorated.

13. DMH allows for the preapproval of various conferences and workshops/educational activities, etc., for DMH professional credentialing continuing education hours. ~~*Case Management Professionals desiring*~~ *Information on activities which have received CE preapproval* ~~*may contact the DMH Division of Professional Development or visit*~~ *will be maintained by DMH and may also be maintained on the agency (DMH) website.* ~~*for further information.*~~

14. For continuing education activities which have not been through the CE preapproval process, the continuing education activities will be subject to the approval of the Division at the time of renewal.

15. Within the parameters outlined above, opportunities for CE accrual include, but are not limited to: training provided through the certified individual's place of employment (including DMH-required training as indicated in the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers*), DMH-sponsored training opportunities, and/or conferences/workshops approved by the Division. ~~through the DMH Division of Professional Development~~.

16. Relevant training which is completed on an annual basis should only be counted once during the four-year renewal cycle period.

17. Continuing education activities should be presented by a qualified presenter and contain clearly-outlined learning objectives. Meetings, regular work activities, staffing sessions, breaks, social activities, etc., do not count towards fulfilling the CE requirement.

18. Any activity completed for the purpose of achieving the ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist certification (such as Case Management Orientation or the web-based Exam/Training component) is not eligible for CE credit.

C. **Reporting the Continuing Education Requirement**

1. Documentation of successful completion of continuing education hours (e.g., training records, staff development printouts, official college transcripts, conference certificates, etc.) should be housed with the Staff Development Officer (SDO) at the individual's current place of employment. The renewing individual should also keep a copy.

2. As part of the renewal process, each renewing individual is asked to attest to the fact that he/she has obtained the required number of appropriate continuing education hours.

3. Unless randomly-selected for audit, renewing individuals in Current Status do not submit CE documentation to the Division of PLACE. *Individuals in Inactive Status must report CE activities at the time of renewal.*

4. For DMH credentialing purposes only, CE documentation should be maintained for six months following the conclusion of the given renewal year.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.4 Renewal Application

A. Prior to the renewal deadline, the Division will send a renewal notice to each certified individual's self-reported home and/or email address. The Division will also notify Staff Development Officers (SDOs) of the upcoming renewal deadline.

B. In addition to the general renewal directions found in this document, the renewal notice will include specific, current instructions on how to renew. Specific directions in the current year's renewal packet, along with specific directions provided on each renewal form, must be followed.

C. Each person who wishes to renew his/her certification must submit a renewal application packet to the Division by the established deadline which includes all required forms and fees.

D. Failure to receive a renewal notice does not relieve the individual from the renewal requirement. Individuals should keep their addresses/contact information updated with the Division.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.5 Renewal Audit

A. Following the conclusion of each renewal period, the Division of PLACE reserves the right to audit randomly-selected renewed individuals to determine compliance with the continuing education requirement. The audit process will include a ~~three (3) percent~~ sample of randomly-selected renewed individuals.

B. If an individual is randomly selected for audit, both the individual and the program SDO will be notified. Along with the notification, the Division will provide detailed instructions for audit procedures.

C. If randomly selected for audit, the renewed individual (in conjunction with the program SDO) will be required to submit to the Division documentation to validate successful completion of the renewal continuing education requirement. (Examples of sufficient documentation would include, but are not limited to: training records, staff development printouts verified by the SDO, conference certificates, and official college transcripts). This documentation must be submitted within a deadline prescribed by the Division.

D. **In the case of noncompliance**, the audited individual will have up to six months to comply, during which time the credential will be placed in Suspended Status (covered more fully in Chapter 10); the individual will be unable to practice with his/her credential during the period

of suspension. Failure to comply within six months will result in the automatic loss of credentialing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.6 Specialist Requests during Renewal

A. *Inactive Status Request*: An individual who is not employed in the state mental health system at the time of renewal may want to request Inactive Status. Individuals must initiate this request by the established renewal deadline and submit all required renewal forms, materials and fees.

B. *Retired Status Request*: An individual who has retired from state mental health system employment at the time of renewal may want to request Retired Status. Individuals must do so by the renewal deadline.

C. *Relinquished Status Request*: An individual who no longer wants to hold the credential may request Relinquished Status. Individuals must do so by the renewal deadline.

D. *Certification status information is covered more fully in Chapter Nine*. In addition to the information in Chapter Nine, instructions on making special requests at the time of renewal will also be included in the current renewal packet; interested individuals should contact the Division of PLACE for assistance.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.7 Certificate Renewal

A. Each individual who successfully renews his/her Current ~~CCMP~~ CCSS/~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II credential may continue to use the appropriate professional title ~~of "Certified Case Management Professional"~~ and practice as such for the next four-year certification period.

B. Each individual who successfully renews his/her Inactive ~~CCMP~~ CCSS/~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II credential may continue to use the appropriate professional title ~~behind his/her name~~; however, he/she must not practice as a DMH Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist during the next four-year certification period (until he/she returns to Current Status).

C. The terms of administrative appeal are applicable to the renewal process.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 7.8 Certification Expiration

A. **Renewal Deadline**

1. The renewal application packet and fee are due on or before September 30th (or closest prior working day, as prescribed in the current renewal notice) of the given renewal year.

2. Any certified individual wishing to request Inactive, Retired or Relinquished Status at the time of renewal must submit the request so that the Division receives it by the established renewal deadline. Otherwise, without proper renewal, the individual's credential will automatically be changed to Lapsed Status.

3. Unless successfully renewed, an individual's certificate ceases to be valid after September 30th at the end of the certification period.

4. Any certified individual for whom the Division has not received a renewal application packet (or a special request) by September 30th will be expired; his/her certification status will automatically be changed to Lapsed Status.

B. **Late Renewal**

1. Between October 1st and October 31st (or closest prior working days, as determined by the Division), professional certification which has lapsed due to failure to renew may be rectified upon submission of all required renewal forms, materials, and payment in full of the Renewal Fee PLUS payment of a Late Renewal Fee.

2. All problems with renewal applications (or special requests submitted at the time of renewal) must be resolved by October 31st (or closest prior working day, as determined by the Division).

3. Incomplete renewal applications or renewal applications with unresolved deficiencies received by the renewal deadline may be maintained on file through October 31st (or closest prior working day) to allow individuals an opportunity to resolve problem(s). After October 31st (or closest prior working day, as determined by the Division), these credentials are expired and automatically changed to Lapsed Status if the deficiencies were not satisfactorily resolved by this date - no exceptions.

4. The certification of any individual who has not successfully completed either renewal or a special request by October 31st (or closest prior working day, as determined by the Division) is expired. The status of any such individual's credential will automatically be changed to Lapsed Status.

C. **Beginning November 1st**

1. On and after November 1st, an individual who failed to renew or successfully make a status change remains in Lapsed Status and will not be allowed to renew.

2. Following the conclusion of renewal season, each state mental health system program will be provided a list of program employees whose credentials lapsed.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 8: Fees

Rule 8.1 Fee Schedule

A. **Application Fee**: $**30.00**

This fee is due with the submission of an **initial** application packet; **this is a one-time fee.** ~~IMPORTANT:~~ Individuals who paid the application fee when applying for ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS do **not** pay this fee again when applying to upgrade to ~~CCMP~~ CCSS. Individuals applying directly for ~~CCMP~~ CCSS (thus skipping ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS) must pay this one-time fee.

B. **Web-based Exam/Training Fee: As prescribed by DMH**

DMH may prescribe appropriate, non-excessive fees for the web-based training component to cover administrative costs; this fee is subject to change.

C. **Renewal Fee: $40.00** *(subject to change at renewal)*

This fee is due with the submission of the renewal packet; this fee is subject to change at the time of renewal and is reflected in the current renewal notice.

D. **Late Renewal Fee: $25.00**

In addition to the renewal fee, this additional fee is assessed when an individual has allowed his/her certification to lapse after the prescribed renewal deadline but wishes to renew during a brief "late renewal" time period.

E. **Certificate Replacement Fee: $15.00**

If an individual makes more than one request for a replacement certificate, the Division reserves the right to impose the certificate replacement fee. ~~Refer to~~ Additional information on certificate replacement is covered in Chapter Five. ~~for more information~~.

F. **Reinstatement Fee**: **$30.00**

This fee is assessed when an individual makes a request to reinstate his/her certification.

G. **Mailing Label Fee**: **$35.00**

This fee is due with the request for mailing labels. This fee is applicable per category of professional credentialing. Mailing label requests will be processed within 14 working days of receipt; the Division reserves the right to refuse any request for mailing labels.

H. **Returned Check Fee: $25.00**

This fee may be imposed by the Division for any check returned due to insufficient funds. Once a return check fee is imposed, remittance to correct the problem will only be accepted via money order.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 8.2 General Fee Provisions

A. All fees pertaining to DMH professional credentialing are nonrefundable and nontransferable.

B. If an application or other credentialing fee is submitted in error, it will not be refunded.

C. Fees are subject to change, with appropriate prior notice.

D. Fees are not prorated.

E. Fees must be paid in full by check or money order made payable to the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. Cash is not accepted.

F. Fees are subject to deposit upon receipt; checks are not held for deposit.

G. No application, renewal application, etc., is considered complete without the required fees.

H. Processing of an application, renewal application, <u>and/or any associated credentialing activities</u> etc., will cease immediately upon return of a check due to insufficient funds.

I. An individual or program whose check has been returned due to insufficient funds may remedy the situation by paying the appropriate fee PLUS the Returned Check Fee by money order only (by a deadline prescribed by the Division).

J. Employers may pay multiple employees' credentialing fees with one check. The check and associated applications/renewal applications, etc., must be submitted together - no exceptions. The employer must clearly identify and match each person and purpose the check covers with the corresponding check. <u>Additionally, the check must only cover DMH professional credentialing fees.</u> Otherwise, the Division reserves the right to return the fee/materials to the program.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 9: Professional Responsibilities

Rule 9.1 Scope of Practice

A. DMH professional credentials are valid only in Mississippi's "state mental health system." DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialists may only use the title if actively employed in the state mental health system *(or in Inactive Status).*

B. Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professionals~~ Community Support Specialists and Certified ~~Case Management Professionals~~ Community Support Specialists are certified to provide or supervise ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination services involving application of the principles, methods and procedures of ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination service provision within Mississippi's state mental health system.

C. The scope and type of community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination services provided by Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professionals~~ Community Support Specialists and Certified ~~Case Management Professionals~~ Community Support Specialists as well as the principles, methods and procedures of ~~case management~~ community support or ID/DD Waiver support coordination service provision are expected to be in compliance with the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers.*

D. DMH ~~Case Management Professionals~~ Community Support Specialists should only practice within the boundaries of their education, training, supervised or other relevant professional experience, and credential(s) held.

E. This certification does not qualify an individual to provide services outside this scope of practice or in private practice.

F. Practicing beyond the scope of practice may lead to sanctions as described in Chapter 10.

G. A person issued a certificate by the Department of Mental Health may use the title appropriate to his/her category of professional certification while in the employ of a state mental health system program *(or while in Inactive Status).*

H. Professional identification is directly affected by employment. DMH-credentialed individuals who experience a change in or separation from state mental health system employment are expected to follow the relevant guidelines below.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.2 Reporting Changes in Vital Information

A. Credentialed individuals are required to notify the Division within 14 working days of a change in legal name, address or employment.

B. **Name Change**

1. Each credentialed individual should ensure that his/her current wall certificate bears his/her current legal name. An individual whose legal name has changed is expected to request a new certificate reflecting the new name. Once the new certificate is generated, the previous certificate is invalid.

2. To request a name change, the individual should submit a written/email request for a name change, along with a copy of legal documentation of the name change. The request should indicate the new name as it should appear on the replacement certificate. Name changes reported at the time of ~~a new application (i.e.,~~ an upgrade ~~or renewal~~ application~~)~~ do not have to be accompanied by a request or copy of the legal documentation; this exemption does not apply to renewal applications.

3. Only individuals in good standing who are currently employed in the state mental health system *(or in Inactive Status)* may request a replacement certificate.

C. **Address Change**

An individual whose email address, mailing address and/or telephone number has changed is expected to contact the Division with the new information.

D. **Employment Change**

1. **Upon separation of the credentialed individual from state mental health system employment**, the individual's DMH professional credential will become null and void unless he/she provides notification of reemployment in the state mental health system or requests and receives an appropriate credential status change according to the procedures established by the Division, as covered in the "Separation from State Mental Health System Employment" section below.

2. Notification of a change in place of employment (not job title) must be submitted in writing/email to the Division of PLACE by either the credentialed individual OR the place of employment from which the credentialed individual is separating.

3. An individual who is either leaving state mental health system employment or changing to a new state mental health system program should follow the requirements under "Separation from State Mental Health System Employment" below.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.3 Separation from State Mental Health System Employment

A. It is the credentialed individual's responsibility to keep track of his/her employment situation (and the potential for notification of separation of employment via the separating employer), accordingly.

B. Once the Division receives written/email notification of separation from employment (as outlined above), the Division will allow the individual a period of up to 45 calendar days from the date of notification to pursue one of the following options:

1. **If the individual has become employed with a new "state mental health system" program**, the individual should update his/her employment information with the Division by submitting a new Verification of Employment Form from the new place of employment.

2. **If the individual IS NO LONGER EMPLOYED in the "state mental heath system**," the individual may request with the Division a status change for his/her credential. **Status change options include:**

    a. Request Relinquished Status (available to provisional and full certification);
    b. Request Extended Status (available only to provisional certification);
    c. Request Inactive Status (available only to full certification); and,
    d. Request Retired Status (available only to full certification).

C. More information on credentialing statuses and how to obtain a status change is listed under the "Credential Status Change Requests," "Provisional Certification Status Categories" and "Full Certification Status Categories" sections ~~below~~ in this document.

D. During this 45-day period, unless employed in a state mental health system program and in good standing, individuals in this situation are not allowed to practice.

E. At the end of the 45-day period, if no appropriate action is taken by the credentialed individual to either: 1) update his/her employment or 2) request an appropriate status change, the credential will expire and be changed to either Lapsed or Defaulted Status, as appropriate; this is an automatic process – no notification by the Division will be made. Lapsed and Defaulted Status mean the credential is expired, and the individual no longer holds the credential.

F. Status change requests **initiated by the credentialed individual** are subject to Review Board approval.

G. If a DMH-credentialed individual has a question about what to do if he/she has left state mental health system employment, the individual should contact the Division for assistance at the earliest indication of such separation.

H. DMH-credentialed individuals must be aware that notification of separation of employment may come from either the separating employer OR the credentialed individual. The Division does not notify a ~~certified~~ credentialed individual when a separating employer has made this notification. The ~~certified~~ credentialed individual is held to the 45-day time frame, regardless of whether the notification of employment separation came from the ~~certified~~ credentialed individual or the separating employer.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.4 Credential Status Change Requests

A. Credentialed individuals needing to make a status change request should submit the request in writing (or via email) to the Division of PLACE, along with any pertinent supporting information. Applicable credentialing timelines must be met.

B. Individuals needing assistance regarding status change requests should contact the Division for assistance. ~~Contact information is located inside the document cover~~.

C. Status change requests **initiated by the credentialed individual** are subject to Division of PLACE and/or Review Board approval. The Division/Review Board reserves the right to deny any submitted status change request**.**

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.5 Provisional Certification Status Categories

The following status categories are applicable to individuals holding the Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credential (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS).

A. **Current Status**

1. An individual holding provisional certification which is in good standing (including timely submission of all forms, fees, changes of information, etc.) and without sanctions will be considered to be in Current Status.

2. An individual whose credential is in Current Status is able to practice within the scope of practice of this credentialing program and the ethical standards/principles.

3. In order to maintain Current Status, a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS is expected to notify the Division in writing (or via email) within 14 working days of a change in vital information such as name, address, employment, etc.

4. The name of a person whose credential is in Current Status will appear on any list produced by the Division if he/she is Current at the time the list is produced.

B. **Extended Status**

1. Extended Status – General Information:

    a. In rare and extenuating circumstances, the Review Board may grant a PCCSS Extended Status on his/her provisional certification.
    b. Extended status will only be granted to a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS who is in good standing at the time of the request.
    c. To obtain an extension, the individual should submit a written/email request to the Division of PLACE. The Division will subsequently present the request to the Review Board. In the request, the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS should specifically request Extended Status, provide an explanation as to why the extension is needed and indicate a specific time period for the extension. Any documentation which supports the request should also be submitted. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request.
    d. An individual on Extended Status is expected to comply with the terms of the extension as granted by the Review Board. Failure to do so may result in Defaulted Status.
    e. The maximum allowable time frame for which an extension may be granted is up to six months *(subject to the approval of the PLACE Review Board).*
    f. If the extension request is granted, the provisional expiration date will be moved to the new expiration date, with no break in provisional credentialing dates. However, if the extension request is not granted, the provisional credential will automatically default, effective per the PCCSS's original provisional expiration date.
    g. If a PCCSS is approved for Extended Status, he/she will only be allowed one (1) extension.
    h. Second or subsequent Extended Status requests will not considered.

2. Extended Status – Individual needs more time to upgrade:

    a. Due to extenuating circumstances, the Review Board may grant Extended Status to an individual who is unable to complete all requirements to upgrade to full certification within the required two year (24 consecutive months) time limit. An extension is intended to allow a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS additional time to complete the upgrade requirements.
    b. An individual granted Extended Status who is currently employed in the state mental health system is allowed to practice as a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS and is expected to complete all requirements of provisional certification by the approved deadline for the extension.

3. Extended Status – Individual has left State Mental Health System Employment:

    a. The Review Board may also grant Extended Status to a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS who has temporarily left employment in a state mental health system program.

b. An individual granted an extension due to having left state mental health system employment may neither practice as a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS nor register for any ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist certification activities for upgrade.
c. An individual on Extended Status for this reason would need to submit a written/email request to be returned to Current Status, along with a new Verification of Employment Form from the individual's new place of employment.
d. Upon returning to Current Status, the individual will again be allowed to practice as a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS and will be able to register for and attend ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Specialist certification activities required for upgrade.
e. An individual who was previously in Extended Status and who has been returned to Current Status is expected to complete all requirements of provisional certification by the approved extension deadline.

C. **Defaulted Status**

1. Defaulted Status means the individual's provisional credential has expired and is no longer valid. A ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS may default for the following reasons including, but not limited to:

    a. Failure to complete all upgrade requirements during the two-year, 24 consecutive month Provisional Certification Period;
    b. Failure to submit an upgrade application so that it is received by the Division within established timelines;
    c. Failure to submit a request for Extended Status, or other status change request, so that it is received within established timelines;
    d. Review Board's determination of failure to submit a satisfactory request for Extended (or other) Status;
    e. Failure to comply with the terms of an extension granted by the Review Board; and/or,
    f. Separation from employment in the state mental health system without appropriate change in status category.

2. Upon defaulting from the ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist ~~certification~~ credentialing program, the individual immediately ceases to hold provisional certification (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS).

3. Defaulting from the program immediately overrides any other status category held by a provisionally-certified individual.

4. To return to Current Status, an individual in Defaulted Status would be required to repeat the application process meeting all current requirements, including any specific requirements determined necessary by the Review Board.

5. Except in rare and extenuating circumstances, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Review Board, a ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS who has defaulted twice will not be allowed to reapply for this credentialing program a third time.

D. **Relinquished Status**

1. A provisionally-certified individual who determines that he/she no longer needs/wants to hold and maintain professional certification may submit a written/email request to the Review Board requesting Relinquished Status. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request.

2. Once approved for Relinquished Status, the individual no longer holds the credential. The individual's certificate is null and void.

3. To return to Current Status, a provisional individual in Relinquished Status would be required to repeat the application process, meeting all current requirements, including any specific requirements determined necessary by the Review Board.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.6 Full Certification Status Categories

The following status categories are applicable to individuals holding full certification as a Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~CCMP~~ CCSS).

A. **Current Status**

1. An individual holding certification which is in good standing (including timely submission of all forms, fees, changes of information, etc.) and without sanctions will be considered to be in Current Status.

2. An individual whose credential is in Current Status is able to practice within the scope of practice of this credentialing program and the ethical standards/principles.

3. In order to maintain Current Status, a ~~CCMP~~ CCSS is expected to notify the Division in writing (or via email) within 14 working days of a change in vital information such as name, address, employment, etc.

4. The name of a person whose credential is in Current Status will appear on any list produced by the Division if he/she is Current at the time the list is produced.

B. **Inactive Status**

1. The Review Board may grant Inactive Status to a fully-certified individual who is leaving employment in the state mental health system and who wishes to maintain the credential.

2. Inactive Status will only be granted to a fully-certified individual who is in good standing (Current Status) at the time of the request.

3. In order to pursue Inactive Status, the certified individual must submit a written/email request to the Division of PLACE. The Division will present the request to the Review Board. In the request, the fully-certified individual should request Inactive Status, provide an explanation as to why the status change is needed and indicate a specific time period for the inactivity. Documentation which supports the request may be submitted along with the request. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request.

    a. **Individuals granted Inactive Status must meet renewal requirements**, including payment of required fees and completion of required continuing education requirements. Otherwise, the certified individual's credential will lapse.
    b. An individual in Inactive Status is allowed to continue to use the professional title behind his/her name, but is not allowed to practice.
    c. A person in Inactive Status may be returned to Current Status upon submission of a written/email request, along with an appropriate Verification of Employment Form reflecting current employment within the state mental health system.

C. **Lapsed Status**

1. Lapsed Status means the fully-certified individual's credential has expired and is no longer valid. A fully-certified individual's credential may lapse for any of the following reasons, including but not limited to:

    a. Failure to renew professional certification according to established timelines;
    b. Failure to make a special request, according to established timelines and obtain an appropriate certification status;
    c. Review Board's determination of failure to submit a satisfactory request for a status change;
    d. Failure to comply with the terms of the status change request approved by the Review Board; and/or,
    e. Separation from state mental health system employment without appropriate status change.

2. Lapsing from the program immediately overrides any other status category held by a fully-certified individual. Upon lapsing, the individual immediately ceases to hold certification.

D. **Retired Status**

1. The Review Board may grant Retired Status to an individual who has retired and is no longer employed in the state mental health system. Retired status is intended for

individuals who have ceased working because they have either reached the age of retirement or have accumulated the number of work years to retire.

2. In order to pursue Retired Status, the individual (upon retirement) must submit a written/email request to the Division of PLACE. The Division will present the request to the Review Board. In the request, the individual should request Retired Status and indicate the date of retirement. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request. The individual granted Retired Status is no longer required to meet renewal requirements/fees and is permitted to keep his/her certificate.

E. **Relinquished Status**

1. A fully-certified individual who determines that he/she no longer needs/wants to hold and maintain professional certification may submit a written/email request to the Review Board requesting Relinquished Status.

2. The Review Board may verify the circumstances surrounding the request. Once approved for Relinquished Status, the individual no longer holds the credential. The individual's certificate is null and void.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.7 Certification Reinstatement

A. A ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist whose **full certification** has expired **within the past three years**, as determined by the Division's records (Relinquished, Retired or Lapsed Status) and who **expired in good standing**, may be eligible to reactivate his/her certification. ~~by requesting reinstatement~~.

B. Reinstatement of certification is determined on a case-by-case basis, at the discretion of the Division and the Review Board. Individuals desiring reinstatement should submit a written/email request for reinstatement to the Division. The Division will subsequently review and present the request to the Review Board. Along with the request, the individual must submit a Verification of Employment Form which documents current state mental health system employment. If the request for reinstatement is subsequently approved, the individual must then submit (by a prescribed deadline) the following to the Division in order to finalize reinstatement: 1~~) paying the~~ reinstatement fee, ~~paying~~ past renewal fees (including late charges), as determined by the Division or Review Board; and, ~~submitting~~ acceptable documentation of continuing education credit as determined by the Division or Review Board. Fees are subject to change.

C. Individuals interested in reinstatement should contact the Division for additional information.

D. **Reinstatement is not available to provisionally-certified individuals.**

E. **During a renewal year, an individual desiring reinstatement must wait six months before applying for reinstatement.**

F. Beyond three years, post-expiration, total reapplication is required.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.8 Credential Verification and Reporting

A. Upon request, the Division reports specific information about DMH-credentialed individuals. The fields of information which may be shared with individuals making inquiry are:

1. Name;
2. Type of certification;
3. Certificate number;
4. Date of issuance;
5. Date of expiration;
6. Credential status; and,
7. Whether or not formal disciplinary action has been taken against the individual.

B. During renewal season, the Division reserves the right to hold such verification requests until all credentialing records are up-to-date, post renewal.

C. <u>The Division does not provide application submission/status verifications.</u>

D. <u>The Division does not provide verifications that a provisional applicant has met his/her upgrade application deadline.</u>

E. <u>The Division reserves the right to deny any credential verification request</u>.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 9.9 DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct

All applicants~~, Provisionally Certified Case Management Professionals~~ and ~~Certified Case Management Professionals~~ <u>individuals holding a DMH professional credential</u> shall comply with ethical standards/principles as established by the PLACE Review Board and the Department of Mental Health.

A. **Introduction**

1. The State Legislature granted Statutory Authority for Mississippi Department of Mental Health certification/licensure programs in 1996. As a result, the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification was created to develop and implement the programs. Having been amended by the State Legislature in 1997, Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* currently includes a provision authorizing

the State Board of Mental Health to certify/license case managers (i.e., community support specialists), mental health therapists, mental retardation [IDD] therapists, mental health/retardation [IDD] administrators, addiction counselors and others as deemed appropriate by the State Board of Mental Health. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board serves as the governing body for the everyday professional conduct of DMH-credentialed individuals. Individuals credentialed through the DMH may identify with different professional associations and are often certified by other groups with promulgated codes of ethics.

2. The safety, health, welfare and best interest of the individuals and families receiving services, and the public at large, are the primary guiding principles for appropriate professional conduct of all individuals holding a DMH professional ~~certification~~ credential. Individuals holding a DMH professional ~~certification~~ credential should adhere to all parts of the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct* listed below.

3. Applicable federal and state laws, the principles, program policies and any other pertinent rules must be observed when conducting business as a DMH-credentialed professional. Alleged violations of the principles may be subject to disciplinary action if the Review Board finds that a person is guilty of any violation of the principles. Information on disciplinary action is covered in Chapter 10.

4. The *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct* herein referred to as "the principles," provide a minimal ethical standard for the professional behavior of all individuals credentialed through DMH. The principles provide a level of expectation for ethical practice from all who hold a DMH credential. In addition, the principles provide an enforceable standard for all DMH-credentialed individuals and facilitate an avenue for recourse in case of a perceived ethical violation. While the principles cannot guarantee ethical practice by all DMH-credentialed individuals or resolve all issues, the intent of the principles is to provide guidelines for individuals who, in good faith, seek to make reliable ethical judgments. **Six general principles of ethical and professional conduct follow.**

B. **Principle I: Competence**

1. Individuals holding a current credential from the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) must be employed by a program that receives funding from or is certified or operated/administered by the DMH.
2. Individuals who hold a DMH professional credential must notify the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification upon any change affecting credential status, especially a change in employment.
3. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, supervised experience or other relevant professional experience.

4. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must provide services only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, supervised experience or other relevant professional experience. Services provided must be based on the most current information and knowledge available within the scope of services of the DMH.
5. Individuals who hold another professional credential shall abide by all principles contained herein.
6. The principles do not alleviate the individual's responsibility to other ethical, programmatic or professional guidelines. Rather, the principles must be adhered to in addition to other applicable ethical, programmatic and professional criteria.
7. Individuals holding a DMH professional credential must comply with all applicable sections of the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers*, as appropriate (including, but not limited to, the *Operational Standards'* sections pertaining to confidentiality, ethical conduct and the rights of individuals receiving services).

C. **Principle II: Confidentiality**

1. Individuals holding a credential from DMH have an obligation to respect the confidentiality rights of the individuals with whom they work and must take reasonable precautions to preserve confidentiality.
2. Members of a treatment team or those collaborating on the care of an individual shall maintain confidentiality within the parameters of the treatment setting.
3. Confidential information may only be disclosed with appropriate valid consent from the individual receiving services or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of the individual.
4. All information collected for the purpose of service delivery must be kept confidential and released only when authorized by redisclosure consent or state (or federal) law.
5. Individuals involved in family, couples, marital or group counseling must be informed of their individual right to confidentiality.
6. DMH-credentialed individuals must preserve the confidentiality of information shared by others, as well as agency policy concerning the disclosure of confidential information and must explain such policy to the individual receiving services.
7. When consulting with colleagues, DMH-credentialed individuals do not share confidential information that could lead to the identification of an individual who is receiving services with whom they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained the prior consent of the person. Information may only be shared to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes of consultation.
8. Permission for the use of electronic recording of interviews must be secured, prior to the interview, from the individual receiving services or a person legally authorized to consent on behalf of the individual receiving services.
9. Confidentiality may be waived if disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable, and imminent harm to oneself or other identifiable person or when laws or regulations require disclosure without an individual's consent.

10. The confidentiality privilege for the individual receiving services is waived if the individual brings charges against a DMH-credentialed individual.
11. Confidentiality may be waived in compliance with appropriate statutes.
12. In all instances, individuals who hold a credential from the DMH should disclose the least amount of confidential information necessary to achieve the desired purpose.

D. **Principle III: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity**

1. Individuals who hold a credential from DMH have a primary responsibility to the individual to whom they provide services. The respect of the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all people is of the utmost importance.
2. DMH-credentialed individuals must be aware of and accept the cultural, individual and role differences that occur in the service delivery environment.
3. DMH-credentialed individuals do not discriminate against any individual because of race, color, creed, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability or political affiliation.
4. DMH-credentialed individuals actively work to eliminate the effect of bias on service provision, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone discriminatory practices.
5. Individuals holding a DMH credential who witness or have knowledge of unethical or discriminatory practices of other individuals who hold a DMH credential are obligated to report such practices to the Division of Professional Licensure and Certification.
6. DMH-credentialed individuals must be respectful of and responsive to individuals with cultural needs.
7. DMH-credentialed individuals must practice appropriate, relevant and sensitive interventions which enable effective work in cross-cultural situations.
8. DMH-credentialed individuals must maintain a fundamental respect for the beliefs, customs, institutions and ethnic heritages of all individuals served.

E. **Principle IV: Reporting Abuse**

DMH-credentialed individuals must meet reporting requirements as outlined by the Vulnerable Adults Act and the child abuse reporting statutes.

F. **Principle V: Sexual Harassment/Misconduct**

1. Sexual harassment/misconduct is considered to be any unwelcome solicitation, physical advance or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature.
2. Sexual harassment/misconduct can consist of a single onerous act or multiple persistent or pervasive acts.
3. Individuals who hold a credential from DMH will not knowingly engage in behavior that is sexually harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact within the service delivery environment.
4. Any behavior that could be construed as sexual harassment during the DMH-credentialed individual's function of providing services for a program that is

funded/certified/administered through the DMH, shall be subject to disciplinary action.

G. **Principle VI: Drug Free Workplace**

1. The Department of Mental Health adopted written policy in Section 71-7-1 through 71-7-31 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated* which outlines state policy regarding a Drug Free Workplace.
2. Programs funded/certified/administered and individuals who hold a credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health will be expected to abide by this provision.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 10: Complaints and Disciplinary Action

Rule 10.1 Grounds for Disciplinary Action

A. Individuals holding ~~provisional or full certification~~ a DMH professional credential must conduct their activities and services in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, these *Standards & Requirements*, the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct*, and any other applicable rules/regulations.

B. An individual holding ~~provisional or full certification~~ a DMH professional credential may be subject to disciplinary action if the Review Board finds that he/she is guilty of any of the following or has knowledge of the following and has not reported such to the Division of PLACE. Grounds for disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

1. Negligence in the practice or performance of professional services or activities;
2. Engaging in dishonorable, unethical, unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud, or cause harm in the course of professional services or activities;
3. Engaging in lewd conduct in connection with professional services or activities;
4. Obtaining a Department of Mental Health certificate or renewal certificate by fraud, deceit, material deception or other misrepresentation;
5. Perpetrating or cooperating in fraud or material deception in obtaining or renewing professional credentialing or attempting the same;
6. Being convicted of any crime which has a substantial relationship to the professionally credentialed individual's activities and services or an essential element of which is misstatement, fraud, or dishonesty;
7. Being convicted of any crime which is a felony under federal or state law;
8. Engaging in or permitting the performance of unacceptable services personally or by assistants working under the credentialed individual's supervision due to the credentialed individual's deliberate or grossly negligent act or failure to act, regardless of whether actual damage is established;
9. Treating any person differently or detrimentally because of race, color, creed, age, gender, religion, national origin, disability or political affiliation;

10. Engaging in false or misleading advertising;
11. Revealing confidential information except as may be required by law;
12. Failing to inform a client of the fact that the client no longer needs the services of the credentialed individual;
13. Performing services for compensation or representing oneself as a DMH-credentialed professional while holding a certificate in Defaulted, Lapsed, Relinquished, Suspended, Surrendered, or Revoked Status;
14. Attempting to utilize the certificate issued by the Department of Mental Health for private practice or for services outside the scope of practice;
15. Engaging in any conduct considered by the Review Board to be detrimental to the profession; and/or,
16. Engaging in any conduct considered by the Review Board to be in violation of the *DMH Principles of Ethical and Professional Conduct*.
17. Revocation by any professional credentialing body may result in disciplinary action and/or revocation of a DMH professional credential. It is the DMH-credentialed individual's responsibility to inform DMH of any previous or pending disciplinary action against him/her by any professional credentialing body or association. DMH-credentialed individuals who have had any past or currently held professional credential suspended, placed on probation, revoked, or otherwise be the subject of any disciplinary action, must promptly notify the DMH Division of PLACE.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.2 Complaints and Investigation

A. All complaints concerning a DMH-credentialed individual's professional service or activities must be received by the Division of PLACE.

B. ~~All complaints concerning a DMH-credentialed individual must be submitted in writing, signed by the individual making the complaint, and notarized~~. The individual lodging the complaint should ~~also~~ include his/her contact information. The complaint should include the charges set forth with such clarity as to inform the Division, the PLACE Review Board and the ~~certified~~ credentialed individual of the issue involved. Complaints lodged with insufficient information may be unable to be addressed by the Review Board.

C. The Division of PLACE will assign each complaint a case number and will log each complaint by recording the following information:

1. The DMH-credentialed individual's name;
2. The name and contact information of the complaining party;
3. The date of the complaint;
4. A brief statement of the complaint; and,
5. Disposition or attempts at settlement.

D. Substantial, jurisdictionally-appropriate complaints, as determined by the PLACE Review Board, will be evaluated and investigated by the Review Board, with consult, as needed, with

the DMH Legal Division. A copy of all communications pertaining to complaints/investigations will be forwarded to the DMH attorney. The Review Board, with DMH Legal Division consult, as needed, will determine the necessity of a disciplinary hearing.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.3 Notice of Complaint and Disciplinary Hearing

A. Upon determination that a disciplinary hearing is needed, the Review Board will notify the DMH-credentialed individual that a complaint has been received and that a disciplinary hearing will be held.

B. The DMH-credentialed individual shall be notified at least 30 calendar days before the date of the disciplinary hearing. Notification will be considered to have been given if the notice was personally received by the DMH-credentialed individual or if the notice was mailed "certified, return receipt requested" to the last known address as listed with the Division of PLACE.

C. The notice will inform the DMH-credentialed individual of the facts which are the basis of the complaint and which are specific enough to enable the credentialed individual to defend against the complaints. The notice of the complaint and the disciplinary hearing shall also inform the credentialed individual of the following:

    1. The date, time and location of the disciplinary hearing;
    2. That the DMH-credentialed individual may appear personally at the disciplinary hearing and may be represented by counsel;
    3. That the DMH-credentialed individual shall have the right to produce witnesses and evidence on his/her behalf and shall have the right to cross-examine adverse witnesses and evidence;
    4. That the Rules of Evidence do not apply;
    5. That the disciplinary hearing could result in sanctions being taken against the DMH-credentialed individual;
    6. That the Review Board will, in writing, advise the DMH-credentialed individual of any sanction(s) to be imposed and the basis for the Review Board's action; and,
    7. That disposition of any formal complaint may be made by consent order or stipulation between the Review Board and the DMH-credentialed individual.

D. The disciplinary hearing will be an informal hearing and will be presided over by the Review Board Chairperson.

E. The Review Board will provide written notification to the DMH-credentialed individual as to any sanction(s) being imposed and the basis for the Review Board's action. This notification will be considered to have been given if the notice was personally received by the DMH-credentialed individual or if the notice was mailed "certified, return receipt requested" to the last known address as listed with the Division of PLACE.

F. If disciplinary action is taken against an individual, his/her employer (along with any applicable third party) ~~will~~ may be notified by DMH.

G. All disciplinary hearing ~~procedures~~ proceedings are matters of public record and shall be preserved pursuant to state law. The final disposition of any disciplinary hearing will be recorded in Board minutes.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.4 Sanctions

A. The Review Board may impose ~~any of the following~~ sanctions, singly or in combination, when it finds that a DMH-credentialed individual is guilty of any of the offenses referred to in the "Grounds for Disciplinary Action" section of this chapter.

B. Sanctions which may be imposed include:

1. Issuance of a letter of official reprimand to the DMH-credentialed individual;
2. Refusal to renew a certificate;
3. Restriction or limitation of the individual's scope of practice;
4. Suspension of the certificate for any period of time;
5. Revocation of the certificate;
6. Approval of the individual's request for surrender of professional credential; and/or,
7. Assessment of reasonable costs for inquiries, disciplinary hearing(s) and/or complaint resolution.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.5 Disciplinary Status Categories

Disciplinary status categories are applicable to individuals holding any level of credentialing available through the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist Certification Program.

A. **Limited**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may choose to restrict or limit a certified individual's practice.
2. To return to Current Status, an individual in Limited Status would be required to meet all requirements as determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

B. **Suspended**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may choose to invalidate an individual's certification for any period of time.

a. The individual's certificate shall be turned over to the Division for the period of suspension.
b. To return to Current Status, an individual in Suspended Status would be required to meet all requirements as determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

2. An individual's certification may also be suspended due to noncompliance with the CE renewal requirement, as determined by the audit process described in Chapter Seven.

C. **Surrendered**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may choose to request the surrender of an individual's certificate.
2. In addition, the certified individual may request Surrendered Status. However, the certified individual's request for Surrendered Status is subject to the approval of the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.
3. The surrendered certificate shall be turned over to the Division.
4. To return to Current Status, an individual in Surrendered Status would be required to meet all requirements as determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

D. **Revoked**

1. The Review Board, as a result of disciplinary action as defined in this chapter, may revoke an individual's certification.
2. Once professional certification is revoked, the individual must return his/her certificate to the Division.
3. Following the period of revocation established by the Review Board, the individual may reapply for certification by repeating the application process, meeting all current professional certification requirements, in addition to any additional requirements determined to be necessary by the Review Board and/or DMH Executive Director.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Rule 10.6 Disciplinary Appeal

A. Following a disciplinary hearing, a DMH-credentialed individual aggrieved by a decision of the Review Board related to the disciplinary action/sanctions ~~shall have~~ has the right to appeal to the DMH Executive Director.

B. The credentialed individual must notify the Division ~~of PLACE~~ <u>and submit the written notice of appeal</u> within 15 calendar days of the mailing of the written notification of the Review Board's action.

C. The DMH Executive Director ~~shall~~ will review the DMH-credentialed individual's case and notify the credentialed individual of the results of this review within 30 days.

D. A DMH-credentialed individual aggrieved by the DMH Executive Director's decision regarding the appeal may then appeal to the State Board of Mental Health. Appeals to the State Board of Mental Health must be made within 30 calendar days of the mailing of the DMH Executive Director's final decision; the appeal must be made and conducted in accordance with established Board policy.

E. All submitted appeals must be clearly marked "Notice of Appeal" in bold-faced type, specifically stating that the notice is an appeal.

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated*

Part 3 Chapter 11: Glossary

Rule 11.1 DMH Community Support Specialist Program Terms and Definitions

A. The DMH Community Support Specialist *Standards & Requirements* glossary is listed below.

B. The following terms and definitions apply to the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program:

1. **Applicant:** An individual who has submitted a *complete* application packet for DMH professional credentialing

2. **Approved Educational Institution:** An *institution* of higher learning which is accredited by a ~~regional~~ Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)-recognized and/or a United States Department of Education (USDE)-recognized accrediting body

3. **Audit:** Random selection of renewed individuals for the purpose of determining compliance with the continuing education (CE) renewal requirement

4. **Board:** The Mississippi State Board of Mental Health

5. **Case Management Orientation:** A ~~case management-related~~ training/corresponding exam which was **previously administered** by the DMH; one of two options for meeting the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program Exam/Training requirement

6. **Certificate:** The document issued by DMH attesting to an individual's DMH professional credential

7. **Certification Period:** Individuals holding full certification are on a four-year certification schedule, referred to as the "certification period." Qualified ~~CCMPs~~ CCSSs and ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-IIs renew every four years by the renewal deadline.

8. **Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~CCMP~~ CCSS):** An individual who obtains and maintains the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health; *this credential was formerly known as CCMP and CCMP-I.*

9. **Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist II (~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II):** An individual who obtained and maintains the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health; (This level of credentialing was discontinued effective January 2009. Though no longer available to new applicants, those who obtained the ~~CCMP~~ CCSS-II credential prior to its discontinuance may continue to renew it as long as renewal requirements are met); *this credential was formerly known as CCMP-II.*

10. **~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services:** ~~Case management~~ community support services as described in the *DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers*; ~~case management~~ community support services generally refer~~s to the provision and coordination of services that are an integral part of helping individuals access needed medical, social, educational, and other services in order to attain their highest level of independent functioning~~ an array of support services which focus on the individual's ability to succeed in the community; to identify and access needed services; and, to show improvement in school, work and family and integration and contributions within the community.

11. **Continuing Education (CE) Hours:** Educational/training activities required for renewal which are designed to increase the professional proficiency of an individual holding a DMH professional credential; one Continuing Education Hour (CE) consists of ~~50~~ 60 consecutive minutes of training

12. **Credential(ing):** A generic term referring to any or all levels of DMH professional certification

13. **Date of Issuance:** The assigned date on which a DMH professional credential becomes effective

14. **Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services/Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination:** The Director of ~~Case Management~~ Community Support Services or the Director of ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination provides direct oversight of a ~~case manager's~~ community support specialist's or ID/DD Waiver support coordinator's work *(as appropriate)* and is the individual(s) at each Mississippi state mental health system program designated to verify the ~~case~~

~~management~~ community support *(or ID/DD Waiver support coordination)* work experience requirement for full certification.

15. **Division/Division of PLACE:** The Department of Mental Health, Division of Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE)

16. **DMH:** The Mississippi Department of Mental Health

17. **DMH Executive Director:** The Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

18. ***DMH Operational Standards for Mental Health, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Community Service Providers/DMH Operational Standards*:** Manual published by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health which establishes and promulgates required operational standards for programs receiving DMH certification

19. **ID/DD Waiver Support Coordination Services:** ID/DD Waiver support coordination services are provided to individuals enrolled in the ID/DD Waiver. Support coordination services coordinate and monitor all services an individual on the ID/DD Waiver receives, regardless of funding source, to ensure services are adequate, appropriate, meet individual needs, and ensure the individual's health and welfare needs are met.

20. **PLACE Review Board/Review Board:** The Professional Licensure and Certification (PLACE) Review Board

21. **Provisional Certification Period:** The Provisional Certification Period is the time period an individual holds **provisional** certification (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS). The Provisional Certification Period begins on the day the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential is issued and can last for a maximum of 24 consecutive months. Provisional certification is temporary and nonrenewable. By the end of the Provisional Certification Period, the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS is expected to have completed all requirements to upgrade to full certification.

22. **Provisionally Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS):** An individual who obtains the ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS credential through the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. ~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS is a temporary, nonrenewable certification. ~~PCCMPs~~ PCCSSs work towards full certification as a Certified ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist (~~CCMP~~ CCSS); *this credential was formerly known as PCCMP*.

23. **Staff Development Officer (SDO):** State mental health system program employee(s) who is responsible for maintaining staff development records and assisting in the verification of ongoing continuing education for renewal applicants. The SDO also serves as a liaison between the program and the Division and as a

resource to his/her program concerning DMH professional credentialing. The SDO is appointed by the Program Director; a record of SDO appointments is maintained on file by the Division.

24. **State Mental Health System:** The network of programs in Mississippi which are certified, funded, and/or operated/administered ~~receive funding and/or programmatic certification~~ by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health *(and also as outlined and defined in Section 41-4-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated)*.~~and/or programs certified/licensed by the Mississippi State Department of Health that are operated by the state mental health system (i.e., Mississippi Department of Mental Health)~~

25. **Upgrade:** Progression (i.e., moving) from provisional (temporary) certification (~~PCCMP~~ PCCSS) to full certification (~~CCMP~~ CCSS)

26. **Web-based Training Component**: A customized collection of e-learning courses (and corresponding exams) designed to address basic ~~case management~~ community support *(and ID/DD Waiver support coordination)* knowledge; one of two options for meeting the DMH ~~Case Management Professional~~ Community Support Specialist credentialing program Exam/Training requirement

Source: Section 41-4-7 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated