



ADMH

Prospective Community Provider-Certification Orientation Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I need an orientation to become certified? The Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) leads Alabama’s efforts to enhance the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities impacted by mental illnesses, Developmental/intellectual disabilities, and substance use disorders. The certification standards and the certification process ensure that services provided in the community meet quality expectations. There are many pieces to the certification process and ADMH wants your program to be equipped with the knowledge needed to complete the process.

What if I don’t know what population I want to provide services to? This is the most commonly asked question when individuals register for the *Prospective Community Provider—Certification Orientation*. Each service area (mental illness, Developmental/intellectual disabilities and substance abuse services) has specific certification requirements. You will have to become certified in each area you intend to provide services. It is recommended that you decide what service population/s you would like to work with and have a general plan for the type of services you would like to provide prior to registering for orientation. If you want to provide services in more than one area, but aren’t sure, you may want to start in one area and apply for additional certification as your organization gains capacity.

Mental Illness Services	Substance Abuse Services	Developmental / Intellectual Disability Services
Generally refers to services provided for individuals living with clinical diagnosed disorders that are characterized by disruption of mood, thought, and/or behavior that interferes with daily functioning.	Generally refers to services that address the treatment or prevention of a maladaptive pattern of substance use (typically alcohol or drugs) leading to clinically significant impairment or distress.	Generally refers to services provided for individuals living with intellectual disabilities characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving) and adaptive behavior during the developmental period or prior to the age of 18.

How do I start my business? The Department of Mental Health is responsible for making sure certified community providers meet and maintain minimum standard requirements of service. It would not be appropriate for ADMH to advise someone on how to start or run a successful business operation. You may want to research requirements for becoming a business, learn how to achieve non-profit status, develop community partnerships, and establish a business plan prior to attending this orientation.

- To find out more information about starting a non-profit business, you can visit the Alabama Association of Non-profits at <http://bit.ly/1nr2D84>
- For information on starting a for profit business see the Office of Small Business Advocacy <http://bit.ly/1hdF2Ec> or the Small Business Administration <http://bit.ly/1qYP45z>

What if I want to invest in property or other areas of my program before achieving certification? You may invest in your program at any point, but you may not provide services to people until the program is certified. Achieving certification does not mean that the Department of Mental Health will provide a contract, funding, or service referrals to your program. It only means that the program meets the ADMH minimum standard requirements for providing services. You must identify the source/s of revenue that will keep your program running. Therefore, you should make sure that the business plan is viable before making major investments.

I want to know the certification expectations now...I don’t want to wait until the orientation to get started! There is a lot of reading to make sure that your program plans meet the requirements of a certified community program. Below you will find links to the Alabama Administrative Code and the certification standards for each service area. Although attending the *Prospective Community Provider—Certification Orientation* is a required part of the certification process, you don’t have to wait to get started planning and learning about the process.

- Alabama Administrative Code—Mental Illness Community Provider Standards <http://1.usa.gov/1mZuxKe>
- Alabama Administrative Code—Developmental / Intellectual Disability Community Provider Standards <http://bit.ly/RV6obG>
- Alabama Administrative Code—Substance Abuse Community Provider Standards <http://bit.ly/1nfusVp>