



The Child Life Certification Commission reaffirms its commitment to the protection of the public. That is the primary purpose of the CCLS credential.

Because CLCC does not administer a practical exam that provides hands-on simulations of essential job functions, we rely heavily on the internship as a vehicle for candidates to demonstrate critical job skills in another context.

As is common knowledge, the number of internship hours required to establish eligibility for the certification exam was raised to 600 hours on January 1, 2019. This decision was not arbitrary.

In 2013, a working group was assembled to review the eligibility requirements for certification and make recommendations for changes. At that time, benchmarking was done to compare current requirements with those of other like professions. In addition, an analysis of the knowledge and skills present on the Exam Content Outline was undertaken.

The decision to recommend an increase in the number of required internship hours to 600 was also based on the following factors:

- Committee members who have supervised interns indicated that the 600-hour duration was the appropriate length to permit the coverage of all the elements listed in the "Definition of Clinical Supervision" in the *Official Documents of the Child Life Council*.
- The understanding that the Internship Accreditation Task Force would be recommending that the duration of an accredited internship would be a minimum of 600 hours in order to become eligible for accreditation.
- This increase would still allow an internship to be completed within a traditional academic semester and would not require major changes to the established examination schedule (40 hours x 15 weeks = 600 hours).

It was determined that 480 hours were inadequate to provide sufficient coverage of the vast array of required content needed to produce a minimally competent, entry-level child life specialist as was defined by the knowledge and skills on the Exam Content Outline. This confirmed the general consensus of the child life community at the time, and the decision to raise the number of required hours to 600 was received with little comment or objection.

At this time, CLCC is not considering a universal reduction in the number of required internship hours.

We encourage academic institutions to consider allowing for extended time for the completion of internships, and it is our hope that internship programs will allow students to return to resume their rotations when the danger has passed. Some have asked if this is allowed and the answer is yes; interns are not required to complete their hours within a set time frame. It is not required that the hours be continuous or performed at only one location. If an intern is unable to complete

their 600 hours at the same location, they may complete their clinical experience at multiple locations and submit a Clinical Experience Verification Form from each institution.

We recommend that interns who are being closed out of their programs midway get documentation of the completed hours via the Clinical Experience Verification Form or a letter of agreement from the hospital. Then, when the balance of the hours are completed, the two forms equaling at least 600 hours can be used to support eligibility for the certification exam.

CLCC recognizes this is a time of uncertainty for many. However, one thing that is not uncertain is the meaning behind the CCLS credential. The credential is awarded only to those who have demonstrated the skills and knowledge necessary to safely (as determined by measurable skills and knowledge) serve the psychosocial needs of children experiencing a healthcare encounter. Standards such as the 600-hour internship are set to protect the credential and give it meaning. The standards are the measures we use to determine if one can safely serve the public. CLCC must uphold such standards in order to protect this meaning, the public, and our profession.

Any questions may be directed to Ame Enright, Director of Certification, at AEnright@childlife.org.