



VAIMH Endorsement® Infant Family Associate (IFA)

Promotion

This category of Endorsement can be most appropriate for those whose work has a primary focus on promotion. Promotion services encourage and support social-emotional wellness in a multitude of ways (e.g., Early Care and Education, Administration, Case Management, Wraparound Services, Child Welfare, etc.).

“Family Associates work to promote healthy growth, development, and relationships. They use their IECMH expertise to support infants/young children, caregivers, systems and other IECMH professionals through direct service and/or macro work.” – The Alliance

Education

Any academic degree, including Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate

OR

Transcript from Child Development Associate (CDA)

OR

Two years of infant-related paid work experience.

Work Experience

Any academic degree, including Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate or a minimum of two years of infant-related (birth-36 months) paid work experience.

Volunteer experience may meet this criterion if it was supervised experience with women during pregnancy or with infants, toddlers, and families and included specialized training (e.g., CASA, Doula, Child Life Specialist, etc.).

Leadership

N/A

Trainings

Minimum 30 clock hours of relationship-based training and/or continuing education that meets competencies as specified in the [Competency Guidelines](#):

- If an applicant holds a degree in a field that is unrelated to IMH, more specialized in-service training may be required to meet the breadth and depth of the competencies.
- Training content should focus on the promotion of social-emotional development and the relationship-based principles of IMH.
- Typically, successful IFA applications include an **average of 40 or more** hours of specialized training unless the applicant has completed coursework specific to the Competency Guidelines.

Reflective Supervision

Not required. However, VAIMH recommends that all infant/early childhood professionals seek RSC.

References *(this is the last step in the Endorsement Application process)*

Total of three professional reference ratings from:

1. (1) from a current supervisor
2. (1) from a person providing RS/C to you. If not applicable, you may ask a colleague.
3. (1) from a colleague, parent/recipient of services (paid or volunteer), teacher, CDA mentor, or Board Member

Exam

N/A

Annual Endorsement® Renewal

IFA Endorsement® is a commitment to the **ongoing** process dedicated to annual professional development as it relates to IMH principles through:

1. Documentation of a minimum of 15 training hours per year of relationship-based education and training pertaining to the promotion of social-emotional development and/or the practice of IMH.
 - a. *A minimum of 1 of the 15 hours must be related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in IMH.*
2. The maintenance of membership in the [Virginia Association for Infant Mental Health \(VAIMH\)](#).