



COMMUNITY RESOURCE SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION

Over 4,000 information and referral
professionals certified!

WHAT IS INFORM USA CERTIFICATION?

a Standards-driven approach to professional development

The Inform USA Certification Program is the premiere professional credentialing program for individuals working within the Information and Referral (I&R) sector of human services.

The Certification Program is based on:

- established standards for the field of information and referral.
- a psychometrically-based Job Task Analysis.

The program identifies specific competencies and related performance criteria, which describe the knowledge, skills, attitudes and work-related behaviors needed by I&R practitioners to successfully execute their duties. Certification is attained through the successful completion of a proctored examination, and is maintained by documenting professional development hours.

Inform USA offers the following professional certifications:



There are separate Canadian examinations available for both CRS and CRS-DC in partnership with InformCanada.

THE VALUE OF CERTIFICATION

for agencies, communities & individuals

In a world where AI platforms and for-profit vendors are entering the human services space, it is critical for community resource hubs to distinguish themselves as the benchmark for excellence in Information and Referral. Certification validates a professional's experience and expertise in resource navigation. It provides reassurance to funders, community stakeholders and the public that an individual has best-in-class training and preparation to serve.



Agencies who employ Certified individuals benefit from:

- Qualified individuals for employment or advancement
- Continued and enhanced competence as a result of recertification
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Reduced employee turnover and increased job satisfaction
- Justification for potential compensation differential
- Ability to pursue agency Accreditation through Inform USA



Communities benefit from:

- Objective, independent, third-party evaluation and assessment of professional competence
- Commitment to public safety and/or consumer protection
- Accountability through ethical conduct standards
- Continued and enhanced competence as a result of recertification.



Certificate holders benefit from:

- Increased recognition by peers and respect from colleagues
- Improved opportunities for employability and advancement
- Greater confidence in their professional competence
- Increased professional trust from employers or the public
- Increased autonomy in the workplace
- Better compensation and career longevity

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION?

for agency employees & individuals

Eligibility is based on I&R and equivalent experience combined with educational background. I&R practitioners are eligible for initial certification only for the jobs they actually perform and/or directly supervise (i.e. you can only take the examination if you are currently engaged in either CRS, CRS-A/D or CRS-DC work), however, you can maintain your certification when working on a freelance basis or between and after employment.

To take the exam, individuals are required to have the following:

- At least 1 year of employment in I&R for applicants with a Bachelors or higher degree
- 2 years of employment in I&R for applicants with an Associates/Community College degree
- 3 years of employment in I&R for applicants with a High School diploma or GED.
- 4 years of I&R employment with no educational qualifications



Acceptable equivalent I&R experience involves frontline (i.e. client-focused) work in the field of human services that includes an I&R element such as positions in social work, discharge planning, consumer credit counseling, community health nursing, independent living skills instruction and school counseling; or employment in a homeless or domestic abuse shelter, food pantry, group home or other similar settings.

HOW TO PURSUE CERTIFICATION





an easy and individually-driven process

The Certification/Recertification Application Form is available at informusa.org for all applicants whether they are new, retaking the exam or re-certifying. Canadian certification applications are available at informcanada.ca. Completed applications, supporting documentation and payment (if invoiced) must arrive at least 30 days prior to the test date. The exam can be taken online or in person. Please refer to the website for a complete list of test dates and locations to find one near you.

When you pass, you will receive a digital badge and printable certificate from Inform USA to recognize your achievement and you may use CRS, CRS-A/D, or CRS-DC after your name.

Certification is valid for 2 years from the date you pass the examination. You must apply for recertification and submit documentation that you have completed at least 10 hours of I&R training over that 2 year period, but you do not need to retake the exam. Your 10 hours of training may include online training, conference workshops, in-house training, CEUs, etc.

GET STARTED HERE

- 
-  SELF STUDY
 -  ONLINE EXAM
 -  2-YEAR RENEWAL



informusa.org/core-certifications