

## CHW Certificate & Certification

The Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance (MiCHWA) Community Health Worker (CHW) certification curriculum launched in 2015. The curriculum was developed in coordination with employers on Michigan's East and West sides after review of a standard curriculum taught in Minnesota. As of November 2018, 35 training cohorts (485 CHWs) have completed the MiCHWA CHW training program since 2015. Currently, MiCHWA has host sites and training partners in Flint, Detroit, Dearborn, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Traverse City, Hillman, Alpena, Ludington, Sanford, and Marquette.

### What is a CHW Certificate?

A **certificate** is issued upon successful completion of a program. A MiCHWA CHW **certificate** is earned upon successful completion of MiCHWA's CHW Curriculum Training Program. Currently, certificates of completion are issued by MiCHWA in partnership with community colleges and organizations hosting and delivering the training. MiCHWA keeps record of all individuals who successfully complete the CHW curriculum.

### What is CHW Certification?

By definition, **certification** is the endorsement by a third party that an individual (or group, organization, etc.) meets a pre-defined set of standards. In Michigan, MiCHWA is working with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to become the third party that will certify CHWs in the eight CHW Core Competencies recognized by MiCHWA. This means that CHWs who either successfully complete MiCHWA's CHW Curriculum Training Program, complete a MiCHWA-certified equivalent CHW training program, **or** who qualify for incumbent worker certification (also known as grandparenting) can be certified by MiCHWA. MiCHWA certifies CHWs through the MiCHWA CHW Registry. Certification is optional and certification does not limit who can serve in a CHW role. However, employers may prefer or require CHWs to be certified through MiCHWA in the eight CHW Core Competencies.

### Why does CHW certification and training matter?

The CHW profession is receiving greater attention and respect each year. MiCHWA's CHW Curriculum Training Program and MiCHWA CHW Certification equip CHWs with the skills and tools they need to be effective CHWs in their workplaces and communities. The MiCHWA CHW Registry will serve as the central point for all data on CHWs who have been trained and certified.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### *How can I be certified?*

All CHWs who choose to be certified will need to register through MiCHWA's CHW Registry. CHWs seeking certification will be required to successfully complete the MiCHWA CHW training and receive a certificate of completion **OR** apply for grandparenting via the registry. To maintain certification with MiCHWA, CHWs must complete 20 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) of approved continuing education before the next certification renewal (20 CEUs every two [2] years).

#### *Is there a cost for certification?*

Yes. For MiCHWA CHW Registry access, CHWs will need to create a registry account and pay an initial \$30 registration fee. Once the CHW has access to the registry, MiCHWA is able to certify the CHW as long as they meet the certification requirements and follow directions on the MiCHWA



Certification page. An employer may choose to pay the registry fee for their CHW(s). There will be an additional one-time \$50 processing fee for grandparenting applications. As of August 2017, the initial \$30 registry fee will be included in the MiCHWA CHW Certificate Training Program fee so that successful participants in the MiCHWA CHW Certificate Training can automatically join the registry upon completion of the training. To maintain access to the MiCHWA CHW Registry and certification the \$30 registry fee must be paid annually on the renewal date.

### *How can I be grandparented?*

Guidelines for grandparenting, also known as incumbent worker certification, are listed below. Other states use a combination of prior training, years of experience, and employer recommendation, all of which have been recommended for use here. Many CHWs in Michigan received training prior to 2015, and we will have options for those CHWs to be certified, depending on their education and experience. The grandparenting application will be available through the registry and the application window will be open for two [2] years. Detailed instructions for grandparenting will be provided on the registry.

### Guidelines for CHW Grandparenting

- Grandparenting is dependent on proof of CHW experience (2,000 hours within the past ten [10] years) and proof of competency (education verification and/or employer sign off on MiCHWA curriculum core competencies).
- CHW experience must be from within 10 years of application.
- CHW experience can be paid or volunteer.
- The CHW must submit two [2] letters of recommendation from supervisors validating achievement of each MiCHWA curriculum core competency.
- Other CHW certifications (out of state) will be accepted on a case-by-case basis.
- Other CHW training completed before September 2017 may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. The training must meet MiCHWA CHW training standards. The CHW training must be a minimum of 100 training hours and cover all eight [8] MiCHWA Core Competencies.

### *What will it mean once I'm a certified CHW?*

Being a certified CHW in Michigan will mean that you have met the educational standards for a CHW, developed by MiCHWA. MiCHWA can certify that you have met those requirements. To date, payment and employment are not yet tied to certification status.

### *If completing the curriculum doesn't auto-certify you, why do you call it a certification curriculum?*

Completion of MiCHWA's CHW curriculum is the first step to certification. If you complete the curriculum successfully, you are automatically eligible for certification. Since certification will occur through MiCHWA's CHW Registry, a registry account must be created. MiCHWA will be able to validate continuing education and renewal of certification through the MiCHWA CHW Registry.

Development and implementation of the MiCHW CHW Registry was sponsored by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund, the Michigan Association of Health Plans (MAHP), and the MAHP Foundation.

For more information about MiCHWA's CHW Curriculum Training Program (i.e. upcoming classes, CHW Core Competencies) and MiCHWA CHW Certification please visit our website at [www.michwa.org](http://www.michwa.org) or contact MiCHWA staff at [info@michwa.org](mailto:info@michwa.org).

