



# Applying for ICF Certification

*A demystifying note for all SeattleCoaches who are earning and/or renewing their International Coach Federation (ICF) Credential*

The ICF keeps raising our professional bar, so the following is our best attempt to stay current. (And this is where all of that personal organization and documentation you created at the beginning of coach training and development pays off.)

There are three levels of ICF professional credentialing: Associate Certified Coach, Professional Certified Coach and Master Certified Coach. Each level is tied to the number of hours of training and practice you've completed. [Here's a comparison](#) of the levels. (FYI, in all of our training and development at SeattleCoach we are always aiming at the PCC level.)

**Remember**, once you've started coach training, you're eligible to [become a member of the ICF](#). This isn't a requirement, but it's not too soon to join enjoy some benefits and to find out what's [happening in ICF Washington State](#).

**You are ready to apply for your ICF Credential (ACC) when you've completed the following five things:**

1. **You have completed Module I and Module II** and can present documentation for our 75 hours of coach-specific training. Again, SeattleCoach is an ICF "ACSTH" Program (see below for what that means).

**Note:** When you complete the **Coaching for Leaders (CFL) Path**, we will give you documentation for 48 hours of coach-specific training. If you continue on as a "Triad Coach" for the next round of CFL in your organization, you will complete twelve more hours along with seven hours of group mentor coaching (see #3 below).

2. **You've logged 100 actual hours of coaching** with at least eight coachees. You may start counting hours at the very beginning of coach training.
  - A. Seventy-five of these hours need to be done as a part of your employment or as "paid/bartered" hours. Twenty-five hours can be pro-bono.
  - B. You can count your thirty hours of peer coaching during Module I and Module II. Here's how according to the ICF formula:
    - **Fifteen can be counted as pro-bono.**
    - **Fifteen can be counted as "paid/bartered."**
  - C. If you do additional peer coaching than what we ask you to do in training, or if you continue to peer coach with members of your Cohort—or with members of another Cohort--or following completion of Module II, you may count those hours as bartered/paid. And any peer coaching you complete in [Advanced \(post-Module II\) SeattleCoach Cohorts](#) can be considered "bartered/paid" hours as well.

- D. In your documentation: Each of the people you've coached needs to have given you permission to use their names in your documentation. If you've done coaching as a part of your employment, you'll just need the signature of the most-involved supervisor. In the old days, you had to submit your log with your application. Here's the current privacy rule from the ICF:

*“Coaches are required to complete an attestation of coaching experience included in the ICF Credential application. This will replace the submission of a coaching log and is intended to help protect the privacy of coaching clients. To ensure the integrity of this updated process, ICF will conduct periodic audits to verify applicants' coaching experience. This means that coaches should continue to obtain and document clients' consent to store their information, have a policy on how that information will be protected and maintained, and have a system in place for tracking relevant data.”*

- E. A minimum of twenty-five of your documented hours must have occurred within eighteen months of your application.
3. **You've completed ten hours of mentor coaching. The ICF requirement is that your mentor coaching sessions take place over a minimum of three months.**
- A. In Module II, coaches complete seven of those ten hours in a group setting, and your Module II certificate reflects that (assuming you were present).
  - B. In CFL, triad coaches complete seven hours of group mentor coaching through the course of our nine months together.
  - C. The remaining three hours of mentor coaching need to be done individually. Choose [a mentor coach](#) you'd love to learn from and with. Make sure that your mentor coach is an MCC, a PCC or an ACC who has renewed their credential at least once, having held it for at least three years. If you had to miss any of our hours together in group mentor coaching, you can make those up in additional paid hours either in a group or individually.
4. **You've got a recording of a good coaching session with a real coachee** (rather than a member of your Cohort) of 20-60 minutes, accompanied by a transcript and a signed [permission to record](#) from your coachee. **If you're working with a SeattleCoach Faculty member, we'll give you very clear direction about what the ICF assessors are listening for in this “performance evaluation.” [This document](#) will give you a glimpse of the “markers” that assessors listen for as you use the Core Competencies.**

If you are a member of the ICF (which you can be even before you've been awarded your ACC) there is an inexpensive transcription service. To find it, log into your ICF profile and click on your name and then scroll down to “partners” and look for **Transcribe Me!** There is a nice discount for “standard service” which is what the ICF normally requires.

5. **And, finally, you're ready to apply when you think you're ready to take for the “ICF Coach Knowledge Assessment” (CKA).**
- a. What is this? A comprehensive exam given to applicants on-line by the ICF, consisting of 155 multiple-choice questions. The assessment is based on the ICF definition of coaching, the Core Competencies and the [Code of Ethics](#). The test is revised, and questions rotated regularly. [Click here](#) to read more about the CKA and to review some sample questions.
  - b. Once the ICF has accepted your application and reviewed your documentation and your recording and transcript, they will send you a link which you will have sixty days to open. Once you do, you'll have a

three-hour window to take the assessment on-line. Once you've completed the test with a passing grade of 70%, you will have completed your ACC. (It will take the ICF a few days to post your official certificate.)

**Note: The ICF has recently revised the list of Core Competencies and SeattleCoach is evolving with them. The revised CCs are very congruent with the old ones—just clearer and more condensed. [This list](#) of Competencies will go into effect for mentor coaching and evaluation purposes in early 2021, but we'll start using them in our teaching and evaluation now.**

[Click here](#) to review the application requirements for “Associate Certified Coach” (follow the ACC ACSTH Path). And [click here](#) when you're ready to apply.

Privacy info from the ICF: *“We will only retain your application materials for six (6) months after your application has been processed. At that time, all your application materials will be deleted from our systems.”*

Once you've earned your ACC, the ICF invites you to post your profile on the [Credentialed Coach Finder](#) page. If you are looking for coachees to work with, you will want to keep your credentialing status and links current both on ICF page and on our own [SeattleCoach Network](#) page. Each month thousands of individual and business consumers come to both places to find coaches that are best suited to work with them.

## Renewing your Credential

**Once you've earned your ACC, you have two options as you continue to accumulate hours with coachees.** The expectation is that you keep adding to your cumulative coaching log (even though you don't have to submit your log, the ICF does periodic audits).

Depending on your goals, remember that both our [Advanced SeattleCoach Cohorts](#) and work with Mentor Coaches are designed to help you as you grow.

Once you pass the Coach Knowledge Assessment you never have to retake it.

1. The first option is to simply renew your credential (every three years). Continued professional development is part of the deal, so every three years, the ICF will ask you to complete forty additional CCEUs (“continuing coach education units/hours”), it's easiest to document them under your profile on the ICF website:
  - a. Log in
  - b. Click on your name (in the upper right corner) then on the next screen
  - c. Under “Profile” on the left side of the screen, scroll down and click on “edit profile”
  - d. Then scroll down to where you see “Credential Renewal Application” and click on it
  - e. Then to add documentation, click on the “Continuing Coach Education Hours”
  - f. You'll see a full list of your renewal/CCEU requirements and guidelines, scroll down until you see
  - g. “Enter Training Hours” then click to add your training hours
  - h. The system will record your entries, and once you've entered all of the requirements, you will hit the “Submit Application” tab
  - i. We suggest you keep hard copies of all certificates, but this system is designed to help you keep track of them and to make the application process a little easier

[Current ICF details on renewing your credential.](#)

- *FYI, each [Advanced SeattleCoach Cohort](#) is designed with these renewal requirements in mind.*
- *And you can fulfill the 3-hour Ethics requirement via [this free ethics review course](#).*

2. The second option is to **within three years [move to the PCC Level](#)** (which, if you plan to become an MCC, you now have to accomplish first). This means that you've reached 500 hours (cumulative—450 paid) with coachees since the start of your coach training. In addition, this option requires that you complete more hours of coach-specific training. Module I and Module II together add up to 75 hours. Coaching for Leaders results in 48 hours. For the PCC level, you'll need additional hours of coach-specific training/continuing education for a total of 125 hours. Here's a good way to think about it:

- a. Ten new hours of [mentor coaching](#). You'll need three hours of individual mentor coaching and seven in a group setting. Mentor coaching hours are also a part of each of our [Advanced Cohorts](#).
- b. The (free) **3-hour ICF [ethics review course](#)**.
- c. Thirty more **hours focused on the Core Competencies**.
- d. And up to **20 hours** of other things, like, **resource development** (like learning to use a new assessment, developing your brand, your biz and your personal visibility).

[Current ICF details on moving to the PCC Level \(follow the "PCC ACSTH Path"\)](#)

*Again, each [Advanced SeattleCoach Cohort](#) is designed with these requirements in mind. These Cohorts will help you to accomplish either goal (plus they are fun and keep you in the middle of our robust tribe of learners).*

Again, you will want to keep your credentialing status and links current both on the [Credentialed Coach Finder](#) page and on our own [SeattleCoach Network](#) page. Each month thousands of individual and business consumers come to both places to find coaches that are best suited to them.

## Finally . . .

### A note about the difference between "Accredited Coaching Training Programs" (ACTP) and "Approved Coach Specific Training Hours" (ACSTH) Programs

The ICF approves two kinds of robust training paths: ACSTH and ACTP. The quality of training is the same and SeattleCoach has been approved for a total of 249 "Coach-Specific Training Hours"--more than enough for all levels of credentialing and renewal. In addition, SeattleCoach is led by a Master Certified Coach.

Very deliberately, Patty has designed SeattleCoach to be an ACSTH program. This means that:

1. As you grow as a coach you can choose to do your three hours of required individual mentor coaching either with a [SeattleCoach faculty member](#) or with another ICF credentialed coach you'd like to learn with who has been ICF-Certified for at least three years. We'll usually encourage you to work with a PCC or an MCC.
2. And that, in addition to the feedback we give you throughout SeattleCoach training, you also receive feedback (and a passing grade) from ICF assessors who review the quality of your coaching. We like that.

The main disadvantage for coaches using the PCC ACSTH Path: the wait is longer and it's a little more expensive.

The path to credentialing can be confusing. Stay organized, keep track of your hours and documents and we'll help you to navigate it every step of the way.

The SeattleCoach tribe will be your “tailwind” as you grow in this life-changing craft, and as you build your brand, your reputation, your business and even your future collaborations.

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