

# INDIGENOUS CERTIFICATION BOARD OF CANADA



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## ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES GUIDE

FOR TRAINING PROGRAMS  
IN WELLNESS AND ADDICTIONS  
OFFERED BY COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES  
AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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## ABOUT THE ICBOC ADDICTIONS COUNSELLOR CERTIFICATION BOARD

The ICBOC Addictions Counsellor Certification Board certification provides a specialized process for certifying Aboriginal wellness & addictions workers that incorporates Indigenous peoples culture, traditions, and healing philosophies and that meets or exceeds certification standards in Canada and internationally.

Our Board certifies qualified Aboriginal practitioners in the field of wellness and addictions, who are employed in a variety of First Nations, Metis and Inuit organizations or programs throughout Canada.

ICBOC offers several professional certifications:

- Certified Indigenous Wellness/Addictions Worker certification (CIWAW);
- Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialist certification (ICAS), offered at three levels (ICAS I, ICAS II and ICAS III)
- Clinical Supervisor certification
- Indigenous Certified Prevention Workers (ICPW)
- Indigenous Certified Prevention Specialists (ICPS), offered at two levels (ICPS I, ICPS II)
- Indigenous Certified Addictions Expert (ICAS III + a specialization)

Our standards for certification are compliant with 11 International Boards and 70 US Districts, including alcohol/drug groups and authorities in most Provinces, and the U.S., First Nations alcohol/drug programs as well as various foreign alcoholism commissions, branches of the military and the First Nations Health Services.

### Authority

The authority of the Certification Board is derived from knowledgeable, experienced, and skilled staff and board members who are dedicated to ensuring high standards of knowledge and practice by the addictions workers that we certify.

This authority is embodied in the Corporate By-Laws of our Certification Board to meet and include First Nations culture and philosophies. Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch has selected ICBOC as the organization to operate as the National Aboriginal Addictions Workers Certification Body.

Individuals seeking certification choose to do so of their own free will and understand that granting of certification rests fully with the authority of the Board.

### Goals of Certification

In the establishment of a system for the certification of Indigenous wellness and addictions practitioners, the ICBOC recognizes the need to define their role in a manner that is distinct from others who may provide additional services to the same client population.

The ICBOC believes that addictions is a chronic, progressive, and potentially fatal disease, that effects the total person physically, psychologically, socially, culturally, and spiritually, and is characterized by tolerance, withdrawal, physical dependence, loss of control, denial, and pathological organ changes (DSM IV).

The primary responsibility of the certified Indigenous wellness and addictions practitioners is to deal with the relationship between a person's use of alcohol/drugs, and the problems experienced as a consequence of such use.

**The goals of Indigenous Certified wellness and addictions practitioners are therefore centered on the following:**

1. Assist the client to recognize that his/her use of alcohol/drugs is a primary and chronic illness rooted in bio-psycho-social impairment;
2. Assist the client and the family in gaining insight and motivation to make a commitment to resolve problems by taking appropriate action relative to the use of alcohol/drugs;
3. To provide experienced, culturally appropriate, professional guidance, assistance, and support for the client's efforts to establish a new lifestyle and value system which is designed to achieve the fullest possible recovery from addiction which requires:
  - a) Total abstinence from all mood altering drugs;
  - b) Replacement of self-defeating behavior and attitudes with healthy ones;
  - c) Treatment of physical deterioration;
  - d) The learning of healthy personal social skills;
  - e) Re-entry into society with a sense of self-respect and personal well-being;
  - f) The spouse, children and individuals close to the addicted person who have been affected by the addiction need also be provided with care and treatment;
  - g) Resolution of cultural, traditional, and spiritual conflicts.
  - h) The principles of harm reduction where appropriate.
4. To recognize problem areas which are beyond the scope of his/her training, skill or competence, and assist the addicted individual or his/her family in accessing and utilizing professional assistance appropriate to their identified needs.

Such activities will, of necessity, cover a broad range of activities equal to the infinite variety of the addicted person's problems such as physiology, age, sex, religion, spirituality, Education, culture, economics, and social status.

### **Education and Training Program Accreditation**

ICBOC provides accreditation for education and training programs that match its own education/training and cultural competency/relevance requirements for professional certification.

ICBOC Accredits programs, not the Institutions who provide these programs.

To ensure that all aspects of a program conform to ICBOC standards and requirements, simultaneous accreditation of the training and **registration of the trainers/instructors delivering the training is mandatory.**

This accreditation allows interested wellness/addictions practitioners to apply the hours of training they have completed, towards their ICBOC certification.

### **General information on ICBOC's Accreditation**

- This guide is intended for Colleges, Universities and other Educational Institutions who wish to have their training programs reviewed and accredited by the First Nations Wellness and Addictions Counsellor Certification Board.

- The training programs that may be accredited are certificates, diplomas, enhanced diplomas and degrees obtained on completion of full time or part time programs offered by Colleges, Universities and other Educational Institutions, including continuing Education programs. Single continuing Education courses may also be accredited.
- The aim of this accreditation is to ensure high quality, culturally appropriate training and the opportunity for wellness and addictions practitioners to apply the accredited hours of training towards their ICBOC certification.
- Those who have completed a program from an ICBOC accredited College, University or other Educational Institution can have all the accredited hours in the program automatically applied towards their ICBOC certification.
- Accredited Training programs are included in ICBOC Directory of Wellness and Addictions training programs.
- All trainers/instructors delivering an accredited program or courses must also satisfy the standards and requirements for ICBOC trainer registration.
- A College, University or Educational Institution can submit accreditation applications for other programs they offer in the field of practice for which ICBOC has a professional certification.
- Accreditation of the training program and registration of the trainers involved in its delivery must be renewed every three years.
- If an accredited training program or course is modified (or cancelled), the accredited Institution must inform ICBOC of these changes or cancellations.
- The changes will be reviewed and if accepted, a new accreditation certificate will be issued with the payment of a reaccreditation fee.
- If new trainers are engaged (replacement or addition) to provide the accredited training program, the accredited Institution must inform ICBOC of these changes.
- The changes will be reviewed and if accepted, a new accreditation certificate will be issued with the payment of a reaccreditation fee.

## Accreditation Assessment Components

The three assessment components of ICBOC's Accreditation Standards and Requirements are:

- Principles and Values
- Cultural Competence and Relevance
- Curriculum and Course Content

## ICBOC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

**The requirements for ICBOC accreditation are based on the principles and values of our organization. These principles and values must be reflected in those of the College, University/other Educational Institution and applied in the development, delivery and evaluation process of the training, and in the content of the training offered.**

The Indigenous Certification Board of Canada is the first and only Certification Body in Canada that uses a certification process developed by and for First Nations and that implements the following principles and values:

- Recognition that First Nations communities have unique and legitimate philosophical and spiritual healing needs, philosophies and solutions
- Standards for the certification of Indigenous practitioners in the fields related to wellness and addictions counselling established by Indigenous people themselves
- Certification and training specific to traditional First Nations healing philosophy and the ICBOC mission statement.
- Role of the addictions counsellor defined in a manner that is distinct from others who may provide additional services to the same client population.
- Recognition of the special skills and knowledge necessary to work effectively within the First Nations Community
- Certification based largely on competence and knowledge about alcoholism/ drug addiction and First Nations people rather than on emphasis on academic achievement
- Authority for First Nations certification comes from the coalition of First Nations Addiction Program/Agencies, and is supported by professionals working in the First Nations addictions' field who share the concern of the First Nations programs for a standard of excellence and competence.
- Certification is offered to Indigenous Certified Addictions Specialists working with First Nations people
- Certification opportunity offered to all workers within the wellness field, i.e. Youth Workers, Family Support Workers, Community Health Representatives, Client Support Workers etc.

We expect that all Educational Institutions seeking accreditation with ICBOC will also support values and principles that are focused on the best interest of First Nations people who are receiving their training so that they in turn can apply those values to serve their own people.

### Matching Values and Principles

ICBOC will evaluate the match between the values and principles of Colleges, Universities/other Educational Institutions, and those of ICBOC by examining accreditation applicants' own statement of values and/or code of ethics.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND RELEVANCE

**Cultural competence and relevance are an integral part of ICBOC's accreditation requirements. It demonstrates the capacity to function in the context of First Nations cultures.**

Culture, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, cultural safety, and cultural competence are all concepts relevant to the integrity of ICBOC's vision regarding its certification, training and accreditation process. These concepts are also part of the larger goal of ICBOC: that certification serves to redress the health, economic and social inequities experienced by First Nations, Inuit and Metis people and accelerate, through education and professional credentials, their progress towards a state of autonomy, wellness, and prosperity.

In agreement with the concepts and objectives expressed by the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing and the Canadian Nurses Association in their document "Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nursing Education"<sup>1</sup>, ICBOC gives full recognition to the important role cultural competencies play in effectively reducing both the inequities and the disparities in health. These competencies<sup>2</sup> are summarized as follows:

- Awareness and acceptance of other forms of knowledge (traditional knowledge, oral knowledge, Indigenous knowledge)
- Awareness of one's own cultural values and privileges
- Understanding the dynamics of difference
- Respect of the cultural integrity of First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples
- On-going development of client cultural knowledge
- Honoring, respecting clients cultural values, belief and practices
- Ability to adapt and implement practice skills to fit the cultural context of the clients being served
- Ability to engage community members and work collaboratively within communities promoting, implementing and supporting prevention, intervention, resilience and recovery and wellness
- Ability to establish reciprocal relationships – training and learning as a two-way process

### Cultural Competence, Cultural Safety and Learning

**An element of the ICBOC accreditation requirements is the ability to understand the link between cultural competence and cultural safety: the impact that training will have in improving the wellbeing of a practitioner's client and community and their sense of trust and safety.**

It is well-known that Aboriginal people will not readily access services if they do not feel safe doing so. According to the National Aboriginal Health Organisation<sup>3</sup> (see chart below - NAHO - 2008), the need for culturally safe care for First Nations, Inuit and Metis is matched by the need for culturally safe learning.

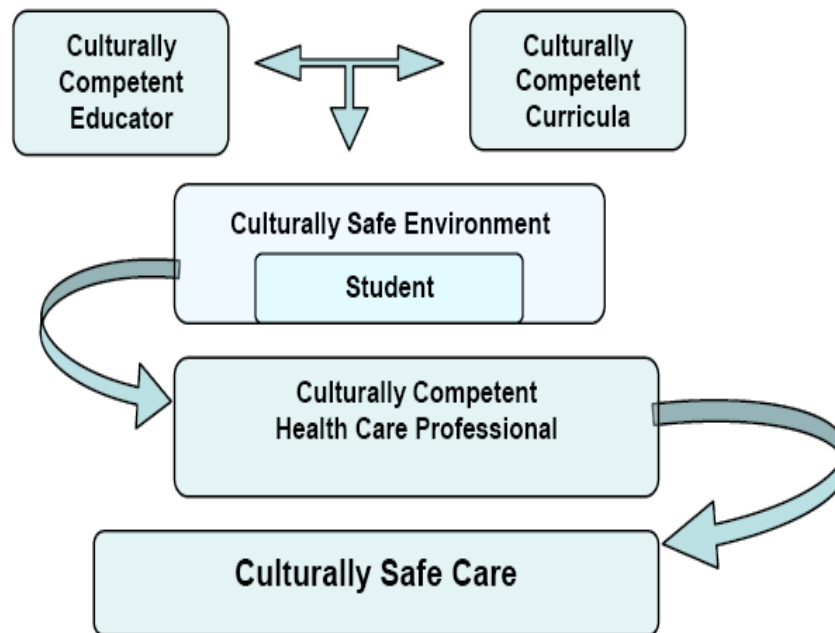
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<sup>1</sup> Cultural competence & cultural safety in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nursing Education – Making it Happen – Strengthening First Nations, Inuit and Metis Health Human Resources – 2009 – Aboriginal Nurse Association of Canada  
[http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/Review\\_of\\_Literature\\_e.pdf](http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/Review_of_Literature_e.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Definition of the concepts related to these capacities are expanded in Cultural Competence and Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit and Metis Nursing Education, pages 20 to 25, at [http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/Review\\_of\\_Literature\\_e.pdf](http://www.cna-nurses.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/Review_of_Literature_e.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Cultural Competency and Safety: A Guide for Health Care Administrators, Providers and Educators  
<http://www.naho.ca/documents/naho/publications/culturalCompetency.pdf>

## Cultural competency/safety education continuum



### ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE

The ability of Colleges, Universities/other Educational Institutions to offer culturally competent curricula and to engage culturally competent trainers/instructors will be assessed by a review of the following:

- Planning/Development process
- Delivery process
- Evaluation process
- Language

### PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

An Aboriginally-designed and/or Aboriginally-informed planning/development process has the best chance to insure that the training sessions once ready to deliver, are culturally competent/relevant.

Cultural competence at this phase of the training project is demonstrated by soliciting the contribution and/or participation of First Nations, in a spirit of genuine intention and respectful consideration of their input. This participation might be, for example, direct involvement in the planning phase, forging a partnership, consulting elders, forming a consultative focus group, distributing/collecting a survey, an evaluation to/from First Nations stakeholders. The consultations are meant to lead to the development of the entire program.

The accreditation process for this phase will include a review of the elements that are part of the development of a new program.



## ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN THE REVIEW PROCESS FOR THIS PHASE

### Program Consultations

- List of those individuals, organizations, Institutions that have been consulted, including mainstream and summary of the nature of consultations

### Program/Course Rationale

- Rationale
- Labour Market Study
- Enrolment Targets
- Career options

### Program Description

- Program Overview
- Goals and Objectives
- Admission Requirements
- Prior Learning Recognition
- Graduation Requirements
- Transfers

### Curriculum

- Please provide the list required in the Application Package, page 9

### Practicum

- Please provide the information requested in the Application Package page 10
  - Practicum information form
  - Description of the practicum developed by your Institution
  - Copy of a blank practicum report

### Course Syllabus

- Feel free to create/use your own syllabus template. Just ensure that you provide:
  - A syllabus for each course in the program
  - All the information listed in the course syllabus template (page 11)

## DELIVERY PROCESS

The Educational Institution needs to document its own requirements related to the professional/technical qualifications of instructors engaged to deliver the program, but the delivery process of culturally competent training also includes several other aspects: the awareness, attitude and cultural knowledge of the instructors, a culturally meaningful learning environment including, for example, the use of cultural protocols, cultural symbols and objects, and culturally relevant teaching/learning methods.

Attention to a culturally competent delivery of training may be demonstrated through the development and implementation of a set of guidelines that the instructors can use to insure the cultural appropriateness of their delivery and the cultural safety of those who take part in the training.

## Trainers/Instructors

While there are many definitions of cultural competence as they apply to educators and trainers, one important aspect of this competence is the understanding that cultural and interpersonal competences are virtually inseparable, as, ultimately, it is the perceptions of the participants that will dictate the outcome of the interaction.

It is not mandatory that programs and sessions accredited by ICBOC be always delivered by First Nations instructors, but it is recommended, especially in case when the topics of the sessions demand the kind of personal and/or professional experience and understanding that only a person from an Aboriginal culture can possess.

Some of these topics relate, for example, to the historical roots of current social circumstances, the specific dynamics in Aboriginal families and communities or to the traditional and or ceremonial base of healing knowledge and practice.

Instructors should also be knowledgeable about Aboriginal epistemology (ways of knowing), so that the content, format and delivery of training are aligned with the receptiveness of the training participants.

"In Aboriginal Educational tradition, the individual is viewed as a whole person with intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions. Each of these aspects must be addressed in the learning process. Holistic Education is the term used to describe the kind of Education traditionally used by Aboriginal peoples. Such Education is organized to develop all aspects of the individual".<sup>4</sup> Appendix 1 offer a list of Behavioural attributes of culturally competent trainers.

## Non-Aboriginal Trainers/Instructors

Non Aboriginal trainers/instructors can be registered upon demonstration of their cultural understanding, sensitivity and competence:

- Knowledge and practice of methods reflecting Aboriginal epistemology
- Knowledge of the people, their history and realities (ex: Native Education certificate, thesis, published papers/articles etc...)
- Knowledge of the subject (addictions/wellness)
- Delivery style and attitude anchored in sensitivity, awareness, honouring and respect of the cultural beliefs and realities of the participants (verified through letters of reference, students and/or supervisor's evaluations)
- Work experience in an Aboriginal context

The College, University/other Educational Institution interested in obtaining ICBOC accreditation will have to include the following:

- CV for each instructor/trainer delivering the program
- A letter from each instructor describing their personal interest in the program
- One (1) Letter of reference from a senior member of the Department/faculty/program who has direct knowledge of the instructor background and performance

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<sup>4</sup> Aboriginal Education Research Centre – Aboriginal Education

<http://aerc.usask.ca/Education/Education.html> Source of the quote:

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996). The Framework: Lifelong, Holistic Education. Vol 3. Ch.5. Retrieved from [http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/si43\\_e.html#2.%20The%20Framework:%20Lifelong,%20Holistic%20Education](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/si43_e.html#2.%20The%20Framework:%20Lifelong,%20Holistic%20Education)

## Teaching Methods/Tools

Although no one study has been able to determine which method is most effective in a cross-cultural setting or which methods are most effective for particular situations, the literature does indicate that First Nations are more receptive to experiential approaches than to didactic approaches.

The lecture or didactic approach is adequate if the only objective is to transmit surface knowledge of the subject. Designing structured experiences and carefully instrumented exercises, paying close attention to the sequencing and mix of activities and allowing learners' time to process their experiences in groups are all critical to the success of experiential training.

The Institution applying for accreditation will provide information regarding the teaching methods used in the delivery of the program. This will be done by including a description of the learning experience in the course syllabus to be provided for each course in the program.

## Learning Environment

Another competence related to the delivery process is the ability to create/provide a culturally safe learning environment (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual) conducive to optimal learning. This can be included in the set of guidelines.

A safe learning environment may include an Aboriginal collaborator willing and able to co-facilitate sessions with the instructor or participate or act as a resource; adapted material to suit the local/regional circumstances; insuring the suitability/acceptability of objects used during the session, setting-up the training room appropriately; ensuring the respectful inclusion of cultural protocols such as opening prayers, ceremonies, sharing circles etc...

## Special Learning Support

This includes any special learning support that will enhance the learning experience of Aboriginal students. For example the provision of traditional/professional psychological support for learners who may be emotionally or psychologically "triggered" during classes, allowing some sessions to be conducted/interpreted in an Aboriginal language.

The ability to present training in the language of the participant is an asset. This can be done in a variety of ways, for example: support written material in the language or inclusion of a resource person in the session who can clarify if needed.

Another aspect of language as a cultural competency is the ability to present content in a way that is adapted to the participants' level of comprehension of the language being used in the training.

Another aspect is the ability of the College, University/other Educational Institution to assess and monitor the cultural competence of the program instructors.

## EVALUATION PROCESS

### College, University/other Educational Institution Program Evaluation

Colleges, Universities/other Educational Institutions seeking accreditation must ensure that they have a process in place to evaluate/review the program. ICBOC requires documentation describing and explaining this process.

## Students Evaluation of the program

The evaluation carried out by the students also needs to be documented. An evaluation form can be provided, that includes at least the following:

- Quality of the learning environment (all aspects cited in this guide)
- Relevance of the training
- Cultural awareness/sensitivity of the trainer
- Learning outcomes
- Strength of training session
- What could be done better?
- Overall participants' satisfaction

## Follow-up process

ICBOC will also assess the quality of the follow-up process that should accompany the evaluation of the program.

## EDUCATION/TRAINING TOPICS AND CONTENT

### Matching ICBOC Education/Training Requirements for Certification

To be considered for accreditation, the content of training programs must be directly related to ICBOC Wellness/Addictions Education/training requirements, as described in the most current version of the ICBOC Standards and Procedures Manuals (CIWAW and ICAS) to be found at [www.icboc.ca](http://www.icboc.ca) under Publications .

Colleges, Universities/other Educational Institutions seeking accreditation of their training sessions must also ensure that the content presents culturally appropriate and relevant concepts, terminology, socio/historico/politico examples and learning activities.

## PROCESSING ACCREDITATION APPLICATIONS

### Procedures

- Once the Institution has indicated its commitment to accredit a program and has provided a list of the courses in the program, ICBOC will forward an application package and invoice.
- The institution sends the completed accreditation application, other requested documents and payment of the fees documented in the invoice to ICBOC.
- The **pre-site** review (completed application package and accompanying documents) will begin upon receipt of the fees.
- ICBOC will aid regarding the completion of the accreditation application: advising applicants if/when documents are missing if the information corresponds to what ICBOC is looking for in a program. If ICBOC cannot accommodate the accreditation request at this point, the onsite fee will be returned.
- Only when the pre-site review is complete and successful will ICBOC and the person acting as program accreditation liaison for the institution decide for an **onsite visit** (1 day for certificate programs, 2 days for diploma/enhanced diplomas, 2.5 days for bachelor programs).

- Within 20 days of the date of the completion of the onsite visit, ICBOC will advise the institution regarding the status of their program accreditation.
  - If the onsite visit is successful, the program will receive full accreditation, documented in a Letter of Accreditation.
  - As any major concerns would have already been highlighted during the pre-site review, only minor adjustments, if any, should emerge during the onsite visit. Accreditation will be granted, and the recommendations can be discussed and resolved. If more time is needed, the program will be asked to make the adjustment within an agreed-on time span.

### 1. Renewal of Accreditation and added or modified programs

- Once granted, the terms of the ICBOC's Letter of Accreditation remain valid for the duration of 3 years and, if renewed, for a further period of renewal.
- A new accreditation will be required for new/added training.
- Substantially modified program (modified content or change in trainers/instructors) must be re-accredited.

## MAKING CHANGES

- The training accreditation initially granted by ICBOC will be rendered invalid if the terms of the letter of accreditation are not respected.
- Most institutions have a program review cycle longer than the 3-year renewal cycle for ICBOC accreditation. But ICBOC must be informed of any changes in the program content or changes in instructors/trainers.
- A training that has been substantially modified must demonstrate that it satisfies the education/training requirements for ICBOC certification and be submitted for a new accreditation review.
- The same applies when a training program is already accredited but is being delivered by non-registered trainer(s)
- When the review of the new information is completed, the Registrar will send a letter to the applicant indicating the decision, the process to finalize the changes and the amount of fees payable.
- Once the accreditation applicant has returned the letter with signature and the fees, ICBOC will register the changes in a new letter of accreditation and forward a new Accreditation Certificate.

## RENEWAL AND CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION

### Renewal of Accreditation

Program accreditation and trainers registration must be renewed simultaneously every three (3) years, on the anniversary date of the Letter and Certificate of Accreditation.

### Cancellation of Accreditation

Colleges, Universities and other Educational Institutions and trainers/instructors must advise ICBOC when the accredited program is cancelled, or when a trainer/instructor no longer delivers his/her part of the program.

## FEES

Once the Institution has indicated its commitment to accredit a program, and has provided a list of the courses in the program, ICBOC will forward an application package and invoice for the following fees:

- A \$500.00 **Application Processing/Review Fee**
- An **Onsite Assessment Fee** based on the geographical location of the Institution and the time needed to perform the on-site assessment (1 day for certificate programs, 2 days for diploma/enhanced diploma, 2.5 days for bachelor programs).
- A **Program Accreditation Fee**, based on the number of accredited courses in the program (\$100 per course). Trainers/instructors must be registered as part of the program accreditation but no fee is charged for their registration.
- ICBOC accreditation of the training program and registration of Trainers/Instructors is valid for three (3) years, and both must be renewed at the same time.
- The total Fee for the education/training program Accreditation **AND** Trainer Registration Renewal is \$500.00 every three (3) years, provided the training has not been modified or that the Trainers are already registered.

## Renewal Fees

- ICBOC's accreditation of the training program and the registration of trainers/instructors is valid for three (3) years, and both must be renewed at the same time.
- The total Fee for the Renewal of Training Accreditation AND Trainers Registration is \$500.00 every three (3) years, provided the training has not been modified or that the trainers/instructors delivering the program are already registered.

## SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Colleges, Universities/Educational Institutions who wish to submit an accreditation application to ICBOC are encouraged to review this **Standards and Procedures Guide for Colleges, Universities, and other Educational Institutions** prior to completing an Application Package. A **College Training Programs Accreditation Application Package for Colleges, Universities and other Educational Institutions** can be downloaded from our website at [www.icboc.ca](http://www.icboc.ca).

If you have any question about ICBOC's accreditation, please contact:

Executive Administrative Assistant  
ICBOC  
P.O. Box 3999  
Kanesatake, Qc  
J0N 1E0  
**Tel:** 1-450-983-8444  
**Email:** [adminasst@icboc.ca](mailto:adminasst@icboc.ca)