



Lamaze® International Accreditation Policies and Procedures

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Lamaze Mission & Fundamentals

Lamaze International® is the most recognized name in childbirth education and our program is the oldest and most comprehensive program of its kind. The mission of Lamaze International is to promote, support, and protect natural, safe and healthy birth through education and advocacy. Integral to the work of Lamaze International is a fundamental philosophy of birth:

- Birth is normal, natural, and healthy;
- Women have an innate ability to give birth;
- The experience of birth profoundly affects women and their families;
- Women's confidence and ability to give birth is either enhanced or diminished by the care provider and place of birth;
- Women have the right to give birth free from routine medical interventions;
- Birth can safely take place in homes, birth centers and hospitals;
- Childbirth education empowers women to make informed choices in healthcare, to assume responsibility for their health, and to trust their innate ability to give birth.

The [Lamaze Six Healthy Birth Practices](#) form the foundation of the organization. These evidence-based practices, adapted from the World Health Organization, promote, protect and support natural, safe and healthy birth and outline the Lamaze fundamentals for pregnancy, birth and parenting. Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs prepare and mentor childbirth educators who will advance the mission and fundamentals of the organization.

The Lamaze Accreditation Council has been established as an independent decision-making body:

- To set standards, guidelines and policy for the accreditation of Lamaze Childbirth Educator Programs and to recognize those programs which meet or exceed the established standards;
- To grant formal approval to childbirth educator programs that contribute in part to the preparation of students who wish to enter the childbirth education profession, through a process of peer review;
- To approve applications and provide Lamaze Contact Hours for educational offerings provided by outside organizations
- To establish, maintain and promote communication with the Lamaze Education and Certification Councils, approved and accredited programs, programs seeking approval or accreditation, students enrolled in childbirth educator programs, prospective students seeking quality programs and organizations providing credentialing services for graduates of childbirth educator programs.

All Council policy decisions must be consistent with policies, budgetary and fiscal considerations established by the Board of Directors, and the philosophy, mission and goals of Lamaze International.

The Accreditation Council is committed to ensuring the integrity of the accreditation process through the systematic, evidence-based evaluation of application materials submitted by qualified applicants.

Lamaze International's Continuing Education Planning Process adheres to the American Nurses Credentialing Center's educational design process. This process ensures that educational activities are effectively planned, implemented and evaluated according to educational standards and adult learning principles. The Lamaze Lead

Nurse Planner oversees the development of educational activities. At least two individuals are responsible for planning each educational activity: a Nurse Planner designated by Lamaze International and an individual with appropriate subject matter expertise. Contact hours may be awarded to participants who successfully complete planned educational offerings.

The Lamaze Accreditation and Continuing Education Planning Processes contribute to improving healthcare outcomes by providing a voluntary peer-review process that defines standards for high performance in providing quality CNE and measures compliance with those standards for organizations that elect to apply for accreditation.

Lamaze International is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Lamaze International is also a provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs

The goal of the Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program is to provide the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve the seven competencies essential for practice as a childbirth educator. Attendance at a Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar may fulfill one component of eligibility for the Lamaze International Certification Exam. The eligibility requirements for the Lamaze International Certification Exam may be found on our [website](#). The Lamaze International Certification Program is the only childbirth education certification program accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

Lamaze Childbirth Educator Competencies

1. Promotes the childbearing experience as a normal, natural, and healthy process which profoundly affects women and their families.
2. Assists women and their families to discover and to use strategies to facilitate normal, natural, and healthy pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, and early parenting.
3. Helps women and their families to understand how complications and interventions influence the normal course of pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and early postpartum.
4. Provides information and support that encourages attachment between babies and their families.
5. Assists women and their families to make informed decisions for childbearing.
6. Acts as an advocate to promote, support, and protect natural, safe and healthy birth.
7. Designs, teaches, and evaluates a course in Lamaze preparation that increases a woman's confidence and ability to give birth.

Minimum Requirements of Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs

Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminars are offered by Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs, and taught by qualified trainers. The purpose of the seminar is to enable the learner to develop the knowledge and skills to plan, facilitate, and evaluate a childbirth education program. The content of the seminar is designed to help students meet the 25 common learning objectives for Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminars.

Each program is planned by a Program Director in collaboration with the Lamaze Lead Nurse Planner, who ensures that educational activities are effectively planned, implemented and evaluated according to educational standards and adult learning principles. Planned content must be current and evidence-based. Each program is developed individually with unique qualities and teaching strategies, based on the expertise of Program Directors.

Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs offer Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminars and mentoring to participants. Some programs offer a comprehensive course of study which includes, but is not limited to the Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar. Each Program is responsible for informing students of the requirements to sit for the Lamaze Certification Exam and the requirements to complete the course of study for their Program, if additional steps are required. Upon successful completion of the Childbirth Educator Seminar, Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs provide participants with a certificate of completion that is consistent with the Lamaze Continuing Education Policies and Procedures.

In addition to attending the Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar and self-study from the *Lamaze Learning Guide* for individuals new to the field of childbirth education field; the following activities are strongly recommended to students by all Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs.

1. Birth observation;
2. Lamaze Childbirth Class observation;
3. Completion of curriculum for Lamaze Childbirth Classes;
4. Practice-teaching of Lamaze Classes.

All Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs are expected to embrace the Lamaze International mission and fundamentals of pregnancy, birth and parenting. Listed below are some examples of activities that are considered possible conflicts of interest:

- a. Publicly advocating a position that is contrary to the Lamaze mission, fundamentals or policy;
- b. Promotion of products in association with the Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar;
- c. Accepting support from individuals and entities that offer goods and services that are not consistent with Lamaze's [Advertising Standards](#) (such as those who do not adhere to the World Health Organization (WHO) Code on Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes) and ANCC Guidelines related to commercial support, sponsorship, potential conflicts of interest and their resolution (see Continuing Education Policies and Procedures, Appendix A);
- d. Being an officer, director, employee, consultant, volunteer, or other participant in the operations of another organization with programs in the same or similar fields as Lamaze International.

Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program Directors and Trainers are requested to obtain approval from Lamaze prior to serving as an officer, director, employee, consultant, volunteer, or other participant in the operations of another organization that is active in the same or similar fields as Lamaze. The purpose of this policy is to avoid situations that might conflict with Lamaze's mission and fundamentals, or reflect negatively upon Lamaze.

The examples above should not be viewed as being all-inclusive. It is not possible to list all the possible conflicts and unacceptable activities that might arise in connection with accreditation by Lamaze. These matters will be addressed on a case-by-case basis as described in the [Lamaze Conflict of Interest Guidelines](#).

Minimum Requirements for Program Directors and Trainers

Lamaze International recognizes two leadership roles in Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs: Program Director and Program Trainer. The interests of Program Directors and Trainers are represented by the Lamaze International Childbirth Educator Training & Resources Education Council.

Program Director Role and Responsibilities

The Program Director is responsible for all aspects of administering a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program. Program Directors must meet the minimum requirements outlined below. Programs may be administered by co-directors and may have multiple Program Trainers, who must meet the minimum requirements listed below. Program Directors are expected to maintain a connection to the broader Lamaze International community, whether by attending a Lamaze International Annual Conference, utilizing Lamaze Contact Hours for recertification, or other means. If the program has additional trainers, the Program Director is responsible for ensuring that additional program trainers stay up to date on Lamaze content and utilize approved training materials in their seminars, and comply with all administrative requirements. Program Directors are under no obligation to approve prospective Program Trainers if an applicant does not successfully meet stated requirements.

Program Director Minimum Requirements

- Current LCCE Educator;
- Maintain FACCE Designation;
 - Current standing as an LCCE for at least three years;
 - Current standing as member of Lamaze International;
 - Demonstrated commitment to promoting safe and healthy births including the Lamaze Philosophy of Birth, research, advocacy, media and community leadership efforts.
- Must complete and submit the Conflict of Interest Form and be approved by the Lead Nurse Planner based on the Lamaze Continuing Education Planning Process;
- Demonstrate commitment to providing evidence-based content; demonstrated through planning documents required for Continuing Education Planning Process;
- Evaluate and accept new trainers, when applicable.

Program Trainer Role and Responsibilities

Program Trainers are responsible for teaching the content presented in the seminar or classroom portion of the program. Program Trainers must meet the minimum requirements outlined below and are expected to maintain a connection to the broader Lamaze International community, whether by attending a Lamaze International Annual Conference, utilizing Lamaze Contact Hours for recertification, or other means. Program Directors may choose whether or not to accept new trainers and may require additional qualifications.

Program Trainer Minimum Requirements

- Current LCCE Educator;
- FACCE status recommended;
- Current member of Lamaze International;
- Support for the mission, vision, and approach to birth and parenting of Lamaze International;
- Experience teaching childbirth education classes;
- Must complete and submit the Conflict of Interest Form and be approved by Accreditation Council Chair and Lead Nurse Planner based on the Lamaze Continuing Education Planning Process
- Attend and co-teach at least one complete Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar under the supervision of an experienced and approved Program Trainer
- Additional observation and/or co-teaching may be required, at the discretion of the Program Director

Student Eligibility Criteria for Lamaze Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs

Program Directors may determine student eligibility criteria for admission to their programs. Once individuals are accepted into a Lamaze Accredited Childbirth Educator Program, they are referred to as “students.” Please see *Pathways to Certification* on the Lamaze International website to view eligibility criteria to apply to take the Lamaze Certification Exam. Programs are expected to customize their programs based on their eligibility requirements.

Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar

The purpose of the Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar is to enable the learner to develop the knowledge and skills to plan, facilitate, and evaluate a childbirth education program based on the Lamaze mission and fundamentals and the [Six Healthy Birth Practices](#). All seminars must prepare students to meet the Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar Objectives. Each seminar must include a minimum of 20 hours of educational content.

In order to successfully complete a Childbirth Educator Seminar, participants must attend the entire seminar and complete and submit an evaluation that assesses how well they feel prepared to meet the objectives of the seminar. Criteria for completing the comprehensive course of study for a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program may vary from program to program.

The seminar must address the following:

- [Lamaze Mission and Fundamentals](#);
- [Lamaze Six Healthy Birth Practices](#);
- [Standards of Practice for Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educators](#);
- [Lamaze Code of Ethics](#);
- [Information about the Lamaze Certification Exam](#).

The recommended student-to-trainer ratio for the seminar is 10 to 1 and will be no more than 15 to 1. An exception to this rule is made when a prospective Program Trainer is co-teaching a seminar; in this case, the experienced Program Trainer must be present during the time that the prospective Program Trainer is teaching.

Lamaze Continuing Education Policies and Procedures*

Lamaze International provides continuing education and professional development opportunities for childbirth educators, nurses and other maternal/child health professionals looking for evidence-based, quality education that is both affordable and convenient. Educational opportunities are also for those seeking or maintaining childbirth educator certification.

Educational offerings include, but are not limited to, seminars offered by Lamaze Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs (content overseen by Education Council, administration governed by Accreditation Council), Lamaze Specialty Workshops, the Annual Conference (overseen by stand-alone committee with representation from Continuing Education Chair) and scheduled and on-demand online webinars and courses.

The Lamaze Continuing Education Planning Process is incorporated into the Accreditation/Reaccreditation Process for Childbirth Educator Programs. Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminars must be planned for a minimum of 20 Lamaze and ANCC contact hours.

Contact hours may be awarded only after a program has been approved as a Lamaze Accredited Childbirth Education Program. Further information about the development of Lamaze continuing education activities and the provision of contact hours may be found in the *Continuing Education Policies and Procedures*.

Lamaze Contact Hours

Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminars are approved by Lamaze International for a minimum of 20.0 Lamaze contact hours. 1 contact hour = 60 minutes of educational content.

American Nursing Credentialing Center (ANCC)

Lamaze International is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education (CNE) by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.
1 contact hour = 60 minutes of educational content.

California Board of Registered Nursing Contact Hours

Lamaze International is a provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing (CABRN).
1 contact hour = 50 minutes of educational content.

Development of New Programs

Lamaze International encourages the development of new Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs and seeks to make the process of establishing a program educationally sound and efficient. Those interested in establishing their own Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs may choose from two options to develop their own programs: the Mentorship Track and Independent Track. Once an interested applicant has successfully completed the steps necessary to develop a program through either the Mentorship or Independent Track, she may submit an accreditation application in order to establish her own Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program.

Mentorship Track – work with a Program Director to develop a new Childbirth Educator Program

This track may be most appropriate for current Program Trainers or LCCE Educators who wish to become Program Trainers first in order to work under the tutelage of an experienced Program Director. See below for more details about the Mentorship Track.

Independent Track – work independently to develop a new Childbirth Educator Program

This track may be most appropriate for experienced LCCE Educators who wish to establish their own Lamaze Childbirth Educator Programs with the direct guidance of the Lamaze International Accreditation Council and Lamaze administrative office. See below for more details about the Independent Track.

Mentorship Track for the Development of a new Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program

The minimum guidelines and procedures for the Mentorship Track are listed below. Established programs may have additional steps required for those interested in becoming Program Trainers and/or establishing their own Programs. Established Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs are not required to mentor prospective programs and any and all fees and additional requirements are established purely at the discretion of the Program Director.

1. LCCE Educators who wish to become Program Trainers and/or establish their own Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program through the Mentorship Track should contact the Lamaze International Administrative Office. Prospective Program Trainers must meet the Program Trainer Minimum Requirements and submit a Conflict of Interest form to Accreditation Council Chair and Lamaze Lead Nurse Planner for initial approval. Upon approval, the Lamaze Administrative Office will provide the prospective trainer a list of established programs that are currently accepting new trainers and the prospective trainer may select the program that best meets her needs. An agreement is reached between the applicant and established program to mentor the prospective Program Trainer(s).
2. Once the LCCE Educator has been approved as a Program Trainer, she will work with the mentoring Program Director to create a plan for the development and administration and of a new Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program. The responsibilities of the applicant and mentor during this process are outlined below.

Applicant (Program Trainer) Responsibilities

- a. Observe at least one seminar under the supervision of mentor;
- b. Co-teach at least one seminar under the supervision of mentor;
- c. Develop the curriculum for Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar based on the standard statement of purpose and objectives for Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Seminars in collaboration with Lead Nurse Planner;
- d. Complete and submit Accreditation Application, Accreditation Agreement, and Accreditation Fee to establish a new Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program.

Mentor (Program Director) Responsibilities

- a. Provide applicant with a clear understanding of the process for establishing a new program through the Mentorship Track, including information about costs, additional requirements, and timeframe;

- b. Provide applicant with comprehensive information about administering and marketing a new program;
 - c. Support and guide applicant as she develops curriculum for Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar using the standard statement of purpose and objectives for Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Seminars;
 - d. Write and submit a letter of support for the applicant once confident that the applicant has the skills necessary to develop the curriculum for, administer, and market a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Seminar. This letter of recommendation will be incorporated in the applicant's application to establish a new Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program
3. Once the above-listed steps and responsibilities have been fulfilled, the Accreditation Council will either approve the application or inform the applicant of additional information or activities which must be provided before the application can be approved. In the case that the Accreditation Council denies a Program Trainer's application to establish a new Lamaze Childbirth Educator Program, the applicant will be notified by e-mail and letter regarding this decision and the rationale.

Independent Track for the Development of a New Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program

The Independent Track for Program Development allows experienced LCCE Educators to work with a cohort of other Lamaze Certified Childbirth Educators to develop a Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar curriculum, materials, policies and marketing plans for operating a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program.

The minimum guidelines and procedures for the Independent Track are listed below.

1. LCCE Educators who wish to establish their own Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program through the Independent Track should submit the Independent Track Application. Applicants must meet the established Program Director Minimum Requirements. The Accreditation Council and Lead Nurse Planner will review and approve/deny applications within 30 days.
2. Once approved, applicants will begin the process of completing pre-work for the Independent Track Workshop.
3. Attend Independent Track Workshop.
4. Observe at least one Lamaze Childbirth Educator Seminar (recommended).
5. Complete and submit full Accreditation Application, with assistance and guidance from the Lead Nurse Planner, Accreditation Council, and Administrative Staff. This process will constitute the planning and development of the Childbirth Educator Seminar curriculum according to the Lamaze Continuing Education Planning Process. Submit Accreditation Fee.

The Accreditation Council will either approve the application or inform the applicant of additional information or activities which must be provided before the application can be approved. Approved applicants will be granted provisional accreditation status. Evaluations and paperwork from the first two seminars will be reviewed carefully and if evaluations are positive and the provisionally-accredited program has submitted all required documents, the program will be granted complete accreditation status.

Program Development Process

When a prospective program director pursuing accreditation through either the Mentorship or Independent Track has begun the process of establishing a program, that program is considered ‘under development.’ Programs under development may share this information with potential students or organizations and will be listed on the Lamaze International website.

Programs under development may not schedule any seminars nor accept any payment under the auspices of a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program until the program has been accredited.

Geographical Policy

Lamaze International’s policy does not restrict the geographic territory of any Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs. However, in the interest of professional courtesy, Program Directors are asked to respect the general domain of other Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs by agreeing to follow the guidelines below prior to scheduling a seminar:

- Check the Lamaze International website for seminar listing(s) within four (4) weeks and 120 miles of anticipated seminar;
- If such a seminar is listed, communicate with the associated Program Director about holding a seminar in close proximity of time and distance and, unless an alternate plan is devised, proceed with both seminars as scheduled.

Program Maintenance and Reaccreditation Process

Accreditation is conferred for a three-year period. To maintain Lamaze accreditation, Program Directors and Trainers must maintain all minimum requirements and submit:

Per Seminar

Continuing Education Planning and Report Documents

Due 30 days prior to each seminar:

- Conflict of Interest Form for any co-presenters who have *not* submitted COI forms as part of regular Accreditation/Reaccreditation Process

Due within 30 days of each seminar:

- Official File Report Form
- Individual Evaluations from each seminar participant
- Summary Report
- Sign-in sheet (must include e-mail address and signature of each participant)

Annually

Annual Reports – Due annually by January 31st of the following year (i.e., the calendar year of January-December 2015 must be reported by January 31st, 2016.)

Annual Accreditation Fee – Due annually by January 31st of the following year (i.e. fees for the calendar year of January-December 2015 must be paid by January 31st, 2016).

Triennially Program Reaccreditation Application – Due every three (3) years.

Reaccreditation Application Fee – Due upon submission of Reaccreditation Application.

Program Directors are asked to maintain copies of all files, reports and applications for their own records.

Incomplete, Tardy and Missing Reports and Applications

Incomplete or Tardy Reports and Applications

Any tardy reports or applications will be assessed a \$200 late fee and may be grounds for program probation. The Accreditation Council may require supplemental materials should they determine that an application was not complete when submitted or if additional information is needed to complete the review. Supplemental materials are due to Lamaze International within 60 after the program has been notified of the request. If the additional information is not submitted within 60 days, the program will enter into default status.

Reaccreditation Extensions

If a program is unable to meet the application submission deadline, the Program Director may submit a request for an extension detailing the need for an extension and the expected submission date.

The Accreditation Council Chair will review the extension request and provide a new submission date within 30 days of the request.

Program Default

A program is in default when it has not complied with reaccreditation deadlines and has not been granted an extension by the Accreditation Council Chair. A program in default may not accept new students or hold any scheduled seminars. To regain accreditation, the program in default must submit a request for an extension detailing its plan to restore its accreditation, as well as the annual accreditation fee and a \$200 late fee. The Accreditation Council Chair will review the extension request. Extensions are granted for 90 days and do not alter the schedule of subsequent summary and report due dates.

Program Structural Changes

Change of Affiliation

On occasion, it may be necessary for a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program to change affiliation. This change in affiliation may occur if there is a change in host institution, change in Program Director, or general transfer of management. Should a program wish to change its affiliation, it must first request approval from Lamaze International. Upon approval, the program must submit the following documents and fee:

- A complete reaccreditation application that details any modifications to the program caused by change of affiliation. If there is no change to a particular section of the application, the applicant may simply state “no change.”
- A letter from the previous Program Director acknowledging the change of affiliation.
- Initial Accreditation Fee: Applied to the year in which program is approved.

Applications will be reviewed by the Accreditation Council and a response will be issued within 60 days. Please be sure to keep a copy of the letter and documents submitted to request a change in affiliation for your files.

The program will be considered as provisionally accredited from the date the request is received at Lamaze International until a response to the application is issued.

Change of Program Director

When a Program Director decides to resign or retire and desires that her program should continue, she must submit a letter of recommendation to the Program Accreditation Committee at least 60 days before the date she wishes to resign/retire. In this letter, she must verify that her chosen successor is already a Program Trainer and meets the Program Director Minimum Requirements, and that her chosen successor has the skills necessary to manage a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program. The Accreditation Council will evaluate the recommendation and determine if the successor meets the necessary qualifications within 30 days of receipt of the letter.

Program Closure Policy

If a program wishes to close, the Program Director(s) is required to submit a letter of official notification to Lamaze International. The timeframe each program allows for student completion should be communicated in writing to all students upon acceptance to the program and should be in that program's policy statements.

When a Program Director plans to close her program, she must commit to mentor her students for the time specified in her program guidelines. If the director is unable to perform this duty herself, she must appoint someone else involved in her program OR she must arrange with another Program Director to mentor her students until the specified time they were given to complete the program.

The closing program is responsible for paying the full annual accreditation fee for the upcoming year if students have not completed the program within the designated timeframe.

If a program closes suddenly due to circumstances beyond control, the Program Director should provide the Lamaze Administrative Office with a list of all current students when and if possible. The Administrative Office will help students connect with other Program Directors to complete the course of their study and will help guide students through the certification process. Refunds are at the discretion of Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs and cannot be guaranteed by the Administrative Office. Students may incur additional fees when transferring to another program.

Adverse Action Policy

To assure quality and ethical practice, the Accreditation Council has developed a process by which violations of Accreditation and Continuing Education Policies or other objectionable practice may be addressed.

General Principles

Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program personnel are expected to:

- Be truthful, forthcoming, prompt, and cooperative in their dealings with Lamaze International;
- Be in continuous compliance with Lamaze International's rules, policies, and procedures;
- Respect Lamaze International's intellectual property rights;
- Abide by laws related to the profession and to general public health and safety; and
- Carry out their professional work in a competent manner.

Scope

This policy applies to complaints received about the quality of a Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program and/or the ethical practice of a Lamaze Program Director or Trainer and adherence to Lamaze Accreditation Policies and Procedures. Actions taken under this policy do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate affiliated and accredited organizations, employers; students; and others may be made about a Program Director's or Program Trainer's conduct in appropriate situations. Individuals bringing complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by virtue of this process, although they will receive notice of the actions taken.

Responsibilities

The Council will ensure that a copy of the Accreditation Policies and Procedures is provided to all Program Directors and Trainers; that all Program Directors and Trainers are informed of the Adverse Action Policy, and that information concerning the complaint process will be available to consumers and the public through appropriate means. All statements and publications made by persons involved in the adverse action process shall be limited to those persons who have a need to know such information as a result of their involvement in the disciplinary process, the oversight of Lamaze International, or the protection of the public.

Grounds

Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Programs must maintain continuous compliance with all rules, policies and procedures established by Lamaze International (as amended from time to time by Lamaze International). Grounds for adverse action include: providing fraudulent or misleading information; misrepresentation of accreditation status; misuse of Lamaze International intellectual property; adverse action by a licensing board or professional organization other than Lamaze International; violation of laws related to public health and safety; identification of quality and/or customer-service issues from program attendees, as indicated on evaluations or through direct communications; and other failure to maintain compliance with Lamaze International's rules, policies, and procedures.

Summary Procedure

In the event of an urgent complaint of significant noncompliance (such as handing out formula samples at a Childbirth Educator Seminar), a program may be placed on probation pending the outcome of a full review through the process outlined below. A program placed on probation may not accept new students or hold any scheduled seminars.

Review Process

The review process for administration of the Adverse Action Policy is as follows:

- To initiate the review process, an individual must submit a written notice describing the situation to the Accreditation Council within sixty (60) days of discovery of the alleged violation by the complainant, and in no event later than two (2) years after the alleged violation occurred. The Chair of the Accreditation Council will refer complaints that are relevant to accreditation and raised in a timely manner to the Accreditation Council; or
- If Lamaze discovers a possible violation, then the Executive Director will confer with the Chair of the Accreditation Council to determine whether the allegation will be forwarded to the Council for review.

- Upon notice of referral to the Accreditation Council, the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program will be notified in writing about the complaint and will have thirty (30) days to submit a written statement or other material for review by the Council.
- The Accreditation Council shall review all written statements or other information submitted by the individual submitting the complaint and the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program.
- When notified of the complaint, the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program shall also be given notice of the right within seven (7) days to request an informal evidentiary hearing before the Chair of the Accreditation Council, at which the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program shall have the right to counsel and the right to cross-examine the complainant. The Accreditation Chair shall within six (6) weeks conduct the hearing and submit a written report to the Accreditation Council for its review.
- The Accreditation Council shall determine: (1) that the evidence more likely than not supports a finding of noncompliance, or (2) that this evidentiary standard was not met.
 - In the event the Accreditation Council determines that sufficient evidence was not presented to support the complaint, this decision shall be final.
 - In the event that the Accreditation Council determines that sufficient evidence was presented to support a finding of noncompliance, they will determine an appropriate sanction for the violation.
- Any determination of the Accreditation Council shall be final. A final decision on the issue raised by the individual submitting the complaint shall be made within ninety (90) days from the date on which the disciplinary review process is initiated.
- In the event the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program wishes to appeal the decision, she must submit the reason for the appeal in writing within ten (10) days of notification regarding the decision to the Chair of the Accreditation Council. The appeal will be referred to an ad hoc Appeals and Mediation Task Force (appointed by the President of the Board of Directors) for review, which may by majority vote change the original decision. The Task Force will render a decision based on the evidence in the record of the review process and the written appeal request; an oral hearing will not be held. The charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program will be notified regarding the outcome of the appeal within ten (10) days. In no event may any change made by the Appeals and Mediation Task Force to the original decision increase the severity of the sanction incorporated in the original decision.

Sanctions

In the event of a violation of or conduct contrary to Lamaze International's rules, policies, and procedures, any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the Council:

- Written reprimand to the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program;
- Suspension of the Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program;
- Termination of the Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program; or
- Other corrective action.

The sanction applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation, focusing on reformation of conduct of the charged Lamaze-Accredited Childbirth Educator Program and deterrence of similar conduct by others.

