



INFANT MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST (LEVEL III)

Endorsement® Requirements

Requirements

Preparation of a Portfolio

Education	Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MS), Master of Education (MEd), Doctorate in Education (EdD), Master of Social Work (MSW), Master of Nursing (MSN), Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Medical Doctor (MD), Doctor of Osteopathy (DO), or other degree specific to one's professional focus in infant mental health; university certificate program, and/or coursework in areas, such as infant/very young child development, family-centered practice, cultural sensitivity, family relationships and dynamics, assessment, and intervention, in accordance with NMAIMH Training Guidelines and Endorsement® Competencies. Official transcript(s) required. Applicants may ask to use intensive in-service training to fulfill some of the recommended coursework.
Training	Minimum 30 clock hours of relationship-focused education and training pertaining to the promotion of social-emotional development and/or the practice of infant mental health. Applicants will include as many hours as necessary to document that competencies (as specified in <i>Competency Guidelines</i>) have been met.
Specialized Work Experience	Two years, postgraduate, supervised work experiences providing culturally sensitive, relationship-focused, infant mental health services. This specialized work experience must be with both the infant/very young child and his/her biological, foster, or adoptive parent¹ on behalf of the parent-infant relationship. Infant mental health services will include concrete assistance, advocacy, emotional support, developmental guidance, early relationship assessment, and parent-infant/very young child relationship-focused therapies and practices. These therapies and practices may include, but are not limited to, parent-infant psychotherapy, interaction guidance, and child-parent psychotherapy, and are intended to explore issues related to attachment, separation, trauma, and unresolved losses as they affect the development, behavior, and care of the infant/very young child. Those who meet criteria for Level III are working with the relationship between the infant/toddler and his/her primary caregiver to explicitly address any unresolved separations, traumas, grief, and/or losses that may be affecting the emerging attachment relationship between a

¹ Infant mental health services that meet Level III specialized work criteria are provided by professionals whose role includes intervention or treatment of the infant/toddler's primary caregiving relationship, (ie, biological, foster, or adoptive parent); these experiences are critical to the development of a specialization in infant mental health. Infant Family Specialist, Level III is broader and includes practitioners whose work experiences come solely from programs that provide education/support/consultation to infant and early childhood care providers or whose intent is primarily to educate parents.

	caregiver(s) and the infant/toddler. The unresolved losses or “ghosts” might be from the caregivers’ own early childhood or may be more recent, such as a difficult labor & delivery or a diagnosis of a chronic illness, delay, or disability for this infant/toddler. Professionals from a variety of disciplines, not only licensed mental health professionals, may perform the work that meets these criteria. However, the applicant will need to have received the training necessary to provide this level of intervention AND receive RS/C from a qualified professional about the intervention. We acknowledge that it may be easier for a licensed mental health professional to find paid work in a program that provides this level of intervention. However, professionals from other disciplines are not excluded from earning Endorsement® at Level III if they meet the criteria. Work on unresolved losses does not have to be explicit with every family with whom the applicant works. But, again, the applicant must have had the training and RS/C that prepares them to provide that level of intervention when it is appropriate for a referred family. In some cases, 1 year of a supervised graduate internship with direct IMH practice experience as described above may be counted toward the 2 years paid work experience requirement if the supervisor of the internship is an Endorsed® professional (Level IV-C or Level III). Applicant will submit description of internship for application reviewers’ consideration.
Reflective Supervision/Consultation	Relationship-focused, reflective supervision/consultation with an approved supervisor/consultant, individually or in a group, while providing services to infants, very young children, and families. Minimum: 50 clock hours within a one- to two-year timeframe.
Professional Reference Ratings <i>*Please note: At least one rating must come from someone endorsed at Level II, III, or IV.</i>	Total of three ratings: one from current program supervisor, teacher, trainer, or consultant, one from person providing reflective supervision/consultation, and one from another supervisor, teacher, trainer, or consultant; colleague; or supervisee (if candidate is a supervisor).



Code of Ethics Statement & Endorsement® Agreement	Signed
Documentation of Competencies	1. Application will document that competencies have been adequately met, 2. through coursework, in-service training, and reflective supervision/consultation experiences, and 3. successful completion of the NMAIMH written examination.

Continuing Endorsement® Requirements

Education and Training	Minimum of 15 clock hours per year of relationship-focused education and training, pertaining to the promotion of social-emotional development and/or the practice of infant mental health (e.g., regional training, related coursework at colleges or universities, infant mental health conference attendance). For those who earn Endorsement® at Level III and provide reflective supervision or consultation to others, at least three of the hours of specialized training must be about reflective supervision or consultation.
Reflective Supervision	NMAIMH recommends that all Endorsed professionals at Level II, III, and IV (Clinical) receive a minimum of 12 hours of reflective supervision or consultation annually.