

## INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION TRAINING APPLICATION

### OVERVIEW: BECOMING A CERTIFIED MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID OR YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID INSTRUCTOR

Becoming a Mental Health First Aid instructor is an exciting opportunity and we are thrilled that you or your designee is interested. Being a successful Mental Health First Aid instructor is highly rewarding. However, this role also requires a serious commitment of time, energy and creativity. Before applying to become a certified instructor, we want to make sure that you fully understand what will be necessary for certification as well long term success as a Mental Health First Aid instructor. If you are in the role of reviewing applications for instructors, we hope the guidance below will assist you in selecting those individuals with the highest probability of success.

---

#### WHO SHOULD APPLY TO BECOME AN INSTRUCTOR?

A Mental Health First Aid instructor is required to serve as a presenter, facilitator and, most importantly, an ambassador of the Mental Health First Aid USA program. There are several key components that make an instructor successful. First and foremost, **it is required that an instructor candidate:**

- Has general knowledge of mental health and substance use issues (i.e. is a mental health/substance use professional, has worked with individuals experiencing mental health disorders or is in recovery from mental illness or substance use disorders).
- Has experience teaching groups of adults.
- Understands best practices in adult learning.
- Has experience facilitating groups.

While the instructor training reinforces some of the skills and knowledge areas above, it is not designed as a substitute for prior knowledge and experience.

Second, instructors must identify financial and operational support to schedule and run their classes. Therefore, it is highly recommended that instructor candidates demonstrate appropriate external support with tasks related to the program. For example, many successful instructors garner support from their employer organization or a partner community organization in order to accomplish the following tasks that are required of instructors:

- Planning (e.g., creating business plans, forming community partnerships, outreach).
- Setting a course schedule.
- Setting and collecting course fees.
- Marketing and media outreach.
- Course registration.
- Event planning (e.g., catering, logistics).
- Seeking grants and other sources of fiscal support.
- Collecting and entering course evaluations and incorporating feedback.

---

#### INSTRUCTOR TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

The Mental Health First Aid instructor training takes place over five days and is taught by two authorized Mental Health First Aid National Trainers. Each training can accommodate a maximum of 30 instructor candidates.

## TRAINING STRUCTURE

National Trainers guide candidates through the three-day training with an emphasis on coaching and preparing candidates to be ambassadors of Mental Health First Aid. Courses typically run from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. or 9:00 am to 5:00 pm each day, with dedicated time on days three and four for independent preparation for presentations delivered on day five. On the fifth day of the training, each instructor candidate will present and teach an assigned portion of the eight-hour course to the group. The National Trainers will conduct an individual evaluation of each candidate, and each candidate will provide a peer review for their colleagues.

---

## OUTCOME OF INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

There are three possible outcomes from the instructor training: **full certification, provisional certification or no certification.** Attendance is not a guarantee of certification.

### 1. Full Certification

In order to become a fully certified instructor, each candidate must receive a score of 36 or higher on their presentation evaluation and must complete and pass a written exam prior to the end of the training.

### 2. Provisional Certification

When a National Trainer discerns potential in an instructor candidate, but also recognizes that an individual will need additional support to deliver the curriculum effectively, they will issue a Provisional Instructor status. National Trainers make this determination by considering several factors including the candidate's exam score, course attendance and presentation score. Candidates who score between 32 and 35 on their presentation are eligible for Provisional Instructor status. Other factors include the candidate's desire to improve and his or her willingness to adhere to the conditions of a Provisional Instructor. The Provisional Instructor receives a certificate along with all fully certified instructors. In addition, the Provisional Instructor will be listed and receive credit for the classes that he or she teaches with a fully certified instructor. However, there are five important restrictions that apply to this status. **A Provisional Instructor:**

- Must co-teach with a fully certified instructor at all times.
- Is not allowed to order any materials independently (ordering materials must be done by their fully certified co-instructor).
- Cannot register a course in the data system.
- Cannot enter evaluation data (evaluation data entry must be done by their fully certified co-instructor).
- May not enroll in an expedited course for additional instructor certifications (i.e. if an instructor has a provisional status as an Adult Mental Health First Aid instructor, they may not enroll to become a Youth Mental Health First Aid instructor as a part of an expedited training).

### 3. No Certification

An instructor candidate will not receive certification in the event that s/he receives a score of less than 32 on the presentation portion and/or does not pass the instructor exam.

Please note that all certification determinations are made by an elite group of Mental Health First Aid National Trainers.

## INSTRUCTOR COMMITMENTS

When an individual becomes a certified Mental Health First Aid instructor, s/he is committing to teach the full eight-hour course with fidelity to the core program model and key messages. Instructors are responsible for almost all components of their trainings, including:

---

- Recruiting participants and securing a training location.
- Collecting course fees.
- Ordering manuals for all participants.
- Preparing course materials.
- Compiling local resources.
- Providing participant evaluations to Mental Health First Aid USA.

In order to maintain instructor certification, instructors are required to:

- Teach their first course within six months of becoming certified.
- Teach at least three courses per year.
- Pass Quality Evaluation visits and assessments.
- Maintain satisfactory participant evaluation scores.
- Engage in instructor/course refresher activities as instructed.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Do not make any travel arrangements until your application has been approved and you have received an acceptance email.

## PRE-APPLICATION ASSESSMENT: AM I READY TO BE AN INSTRUCTOR?

This self-assessment is designed to help you determine your level of readiness to become a Mental Health First Aid instructor. The self-assessment score will not be included in your final application score, should you choose to apply. Please rate yourself on the following items using the scale provided below.

**1 – Strongly disagree    2 – Disagree    3 – Neither agree or disagree    4 – Agree    5 – Strongly Agree**

Score	
<u>Before The Training</u>	
	I have solid knowledge of the goals of the Mental Health First Aid program.
	I have solid knowledge of mental health, mental illness and substance use.
	I am comfortable presenting in front of groups of 15-30 participants.
	I am familiar with the use of PowerPoint and a remote.
	I am comfortable adhering to a set curriculum of objectives, required talking points and activities.
	My organization has made this program a priority for me and my time.
<u>During the Training</u>	
	I have cleared my schedule of any conflicts during the training timeframe.
	I am ready to give adequate time to work on my exam and presentation.
<u>After The Training</u>	
	I am willing and able to spend an average of 40 additional hours learning the curriculum prior to teaching my first course.
	I intend to solicit feedback from others to improve my instruction (i.e. other instructors, participants).
	I am confident that I can plan and deliver 3 courses in the coming year.
	I intend to invest in learning activities to support my mastery of the curriculum.
	I will promote and maintain the fidelity of the Mental Health First Aid course.
<u>Interest</u>	
	I am passionate about teaching a mental health public education model of intervention.
	De-stigmatization of mental health and substance use disorders is important to me.
<u>Interpersonal Skills</u>	
	People describe me as someone who can connect with diverse audiences.
	I am able to resist becoming defensive when challenged and am able to understand the emotion underneath the challenge and respond respectfully.
	When facilitating groups, I can effectively draw people out or limit participation.
	I have the flexibility needed to work well with another instructor who has a different style of instruction and interaction.
<u>Regulation</u>	
	My life experiences will serve as an asset to teaching Mental Health First Aid.
	I am confident that I am emotionally ready to be an instructor (i.e. if I have experienced a trauma in my own life, enough time and healing has taken place).
	I am able to maintain my composure when participants disagree with and challenge me or the course content.
<u>Organizational Skills</u>	
	I can organize my thinking, speaking and materials to effectively teach the course.
	I can monitor myself and adhere to a timed agenda throughout the course.
TOTAL SCORE:	
Scoring Rubric:	
	<i>Highly ready</i> 109 -120
	<i>Very ready</i> 97- 108
	<i>Moderately ready</i> 84 - 96
	<i>May not be ready at this time</i> below 84



**APPLICATION: INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION TRAINING**

<b>Part I: Applicant Information</b>	
<b>Name (First Last):</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Primary Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Secondary Phone Number:</b>	
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	
<b>Applicant Type:</b> (Check all that apply)	I am a current instructor – this is an expedited application I am applying as an independent trainer (not affiliated with org) I am applying as an agent of my employer Other (please specify):
	I identify as a person with lived experience or a person in long term recovery I support a family member with serious mental illness
<b>NITT Project AWARE Funding:</b> Federally funded grant program through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)	I am not connected to a Project AWARE grantee I am connected to a Project AWARE grantee (please specify)
	I am connected to a State Educational Agency Grantee (SEA) I am connected to a Local Educational Agency Grantee (LEA)
<b>Organization Name:</b> (if applying as an agent of your employer)	
<b>Organization Type:</b>	Private Public Not-for-profit For-profit Other (please specify):
<b>Industry Type:</b> (Check all that apply)	Faith community Corporate Human resources/Employee Assistance Program Law enforcement/public safety Higher education Primary/secondary education Hospitality Older adults Social services Behavioral health care Other health care Government Other (please specify):



<b>Organizational Service Area:</b> (Check all that apply)	Urban Suburban Rural Frontier	
<b>Desired Training Date and Location:</b> (For a full list of trainings offered, click <a href="#">here</a> )	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Choice</b> Date: Location:	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Choice:</b> Date: Location:
<b>Are you applying for a Youth or Adult instructor training?</b>	Youth Adult	
<b>Does your organization have a primary contact for Mental Health First Aid activities?</b>	Yes No  If yes, please provide the name and contact information of that person. <b>Name:</b> <b>Email:</b> <b>Phone number:</b>	
<b>Does your organization have an active community/public education program?</b>	Yes No	
<b>How did you find out about the instructor training program?</b>	Employer email Employer requirement Professional relationship Personal relationship Internet search Mental Health First Aid USA website Mental Health First Aid instructor Have taken the 8-hour course Other (please specify):	



**Part II: Applicant Experience and Qualifications**

*Please note that each response will be scored. You are encouraged to provide as much detail as word limit permits.*

***Expedited Participants (Existing instructors seeking dual certification): Please only answer questions 10, 12-15.***

1. Why do you want to become an instructor? (max 200 words)

2. Please provide a description of your personal and/or professional experiences in the field of mental health that qualify you to teach a Mental Health First Aid course (i.e. clinical experience, personal or family history, social service experience, etc.). Please provide time frames for any relevant experience. (max 300 words)

3. Please provide a description of your experiences in adult instruction that would qualify you as a strong candidate to be an effective Mental Health First Aid instructor (i.e. group facilitation, teaching, etc.). Please provide time frames for any relevant experience. (max 300 words)

Have you taken a Mental Health First Aid course?

Yes

No

If so, when did you take the course? (mm/yy):



5. What other skills or experiences do you have that you believe will support your success as a Mental Health First Aid instructor? (max 200 words)

**Part III: Understanding of Program**

6. What does the term “mental health” mean to you? (max 200 words)

7. What factors do you believe create and maintain the stigma associated with individuals who have mental health problems? (max 150 words)

8. What are the key messages of Mental Health First Aid? (max 200 words)





9. What do you believe are the skills and attitudes needed to be an effective Mental Health First Aid instructor? (max 150 words)

10. What would you do if during one of the Mental health First Aid training sessions you are conducting, a participant approaches you privately about a personal mental health problem s/he is experiencing? (max 250 words)

11. How does Mental Health First Aid support/complement the work you or your organization is already doing? (max 200 words)

**Part IV: Strategic Plan for Implementation**

12. Please provide some examples of how you have effectively networked with organizations, local services or other partners within your community to support an initiative (i.e. public education initiative, community event, volunteering, etc.).\*\* (max 200 words)

13. Mental Health First Aid is intended to have a broad appeal to the public. Please describe your plan to implement this program in the next year. Be sure to include information about how you plan to secure (or have secured) funding, how you plan to market your courses, who you will partner with and what audiences you plan to target.\*\* (max 400 words)

14. When do you plan to teach your first course and who will be your target audience? (max 150 words)



15. What are some potential barriers you may face when trying to implement your above strategies? (max 200 words)

*\*\*If another individual or organization will be responsible for networking and marketing your course(s), and/or you are involved in Project AWARE and are unable to participate in marketing activities, please identify the individual or organization (or involvement) and ensure this is reflected in your answers to questions 12 and 13.*

**PLEASE NOTE: Do not make travel arrangements until your application has been approved and you have received an acceptance email.**