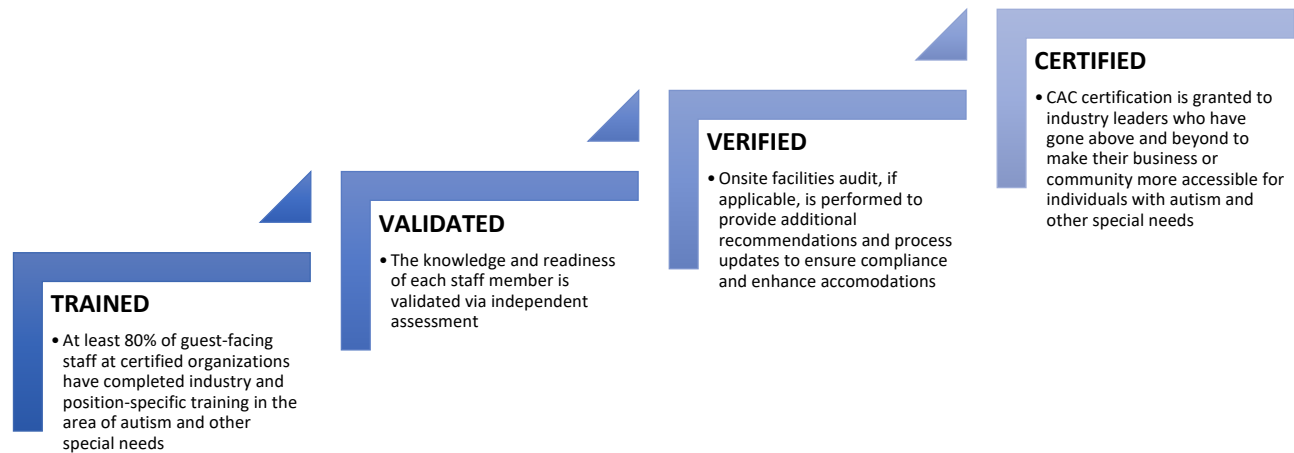


WHAT ARE THE IBCCES CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS?



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Certified Autism Destination™?

The CAD designation, awarded by IBCCES, is given to communities where key stakeholders in the travel, hospitality and recreation industries are trained and certified to better serve autistic and sensory sensitive individuals. This designation is achieved through multiple organizations in each category completing the Certified Autism Center® (CAC) designation.



What is a Certified Autism Center®?

The requirements to become a CAC through IBCCES include training at least 80% of guest or public-facing staff in autism and sensory disorders through IBCCES. The process may also include an onsite review, as well as the creation of sensory guides and in-depth recommendations for attractions and interactive spaces. The goal is to better prepare staff and management to serve individuals with autism or sensory needs. The certification must be renewed every 2 years with updated training provided for staff at each certified organization.



IBCCES is an independent credentialing organization that was founded in 2001 with the goal to provide specialized training and certification to professionals working with autistic individuals and individuals with other cognitive disorders. IBCCES is a social impact company with the mission to provide training and certification to healthcare, corporate, education and travel professionals in order to improve the experiences and outcomes of autistic individuals and those with other disorders. IBCCES is a leader in the training and certification for cognitive disorders, including autism. We work in more than 87 countries across the globe.

- IBCCES works with an advisory board of clinical specialists with expertise in neurology, psychology, behavior therapy, special education, travel, and other disciplines, as well as autistic individuals. This advisory board is actively involved and participates in creating the training programs offered by IBCCES, which is evidence-based and promotes best practices from experts in multiple disciplines.
- IBCCES does not believe there is a “one size fits all” approach and thus brings together the expertise and learnings from multiple areas as well as the viewpoints and experiences of autistic individuals.

- IBCCES recognized that many families with autistic children or those with other sensory sensitivities may face challenges or hesitation when visiting a new attraction or destination. In response to this need, IBCCES created training and certification programs specifically for the hospitality and attractions. IBCCES is the only credentialing organization providing this type of certification, which includes evidence-based information as well as the perspectives of autistic individuals, alongside other tools and resources to ensure the program is a long-term commitment and has a lasting impact.

What does it mean when an individual has been trained as part of the CAC process?

IBCCES offers industry and position-specific training, as well as individual professional credentials. Depending on an individual's position within an organization, their training may have focused on guest service in a recreational space and building empathy and understanding of what visitors with autism may need, or it may have been more extensive (up to 14 credit hours) and include specific techniques and strategies for professionals working within educational or healthcare environments, or specific to scenarios law enforcement or first responders may encounter.

- The credentials and training are meant to supplement or build upon existing departmental and organizational regulations and rules, particularly in a safety or healthcare setting where professional protocols for patient or individual health and safety are already in existence.
- All staff that complete training through IBCCES complete a competency exam specific to their training program to ensure comprehension.

What are staff at CACs being trained to do?

The training and certification provided by IBCCES are specific to industry and position.

- For travel and leisure-related organizations, such as hotels, attractions, and visitor services, staff are trained to better understand what autism is (and isn't), how to empathize and understand how autistic individuals experience the world, communicate more effectively, and be aware of common sensitivities and concerns in a recreational environment.

Why become a CAD or CAC? What are the benefits?

The purpose of the training and certification programs offered by IBCCES are to ultimately improve the experience and outcomes for individuals with autism and other related disorders.

- The focus is on building understanding and empathy, as well as improving processes and options for individuals with these needs, and ensuring staff have appropriate tools and strategies when engaging with a neurodiverse population.
- With 1 in 36 children diagnosed with autism (according to the Centers for Disease Control), along with millions of individuals who were never diagnosed but are on the spectrum, and 1 in 6 individuals having a sensory need or sensitivity, the need has never been greater.
- Specifically, the goal for visitor organizations and travel professionals is to ensure there are options for visitors to help ensure their experiences are as positive as possible when traveling to and engaging with local hospitality, recreation, and entertainment options.

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