



Getting Started Form for Category II: Infant or Early Childhood Family Specialist

This form is an optional self-study to help assess your experiences and determine what additional specialized training might be necessary to meet the competencies and earn MassAIMH Endorsement®.

1. **Read the Competency Guidelines**®, paying special attention to the specifics of the requirements for the category of Endorsement® for which you are applying
2. **Review** your resume/vita, a copy (unofficial is ok) of your transcripts, and gather your in-service training records
3. **Look at what you have done**, using the self-study grid below, and ask yourself if you have had a college/university course, an in-service training, work experience or a reflective supervision/consultation (RSC) experience that has contributed to your knowledge or skill in a particular area. For now, place a check mark in the appropriate box. Consider where your strengths lie and what you need to do to “fill in the gaps” to develop greater competency as an Infant Family Specialist (IFS) or Early Childhood Family Specialist (ECFS).
4. **Keep in mind** that during a formal Application review, a minimum of two trained Reviewers will comprehensively examine your materials and come to an agreement about whether or not you have met the requirements and competencies. All of the knowledge and skill areas are required (as specified for each category of Endorsement®), but application reviewers will be paying closest attention to those listed under *Theoretical Foundations* and *Direct Service Skills*. In general, when considering whether or not a knowledge/skill area has been “met,” the most weight is given to college courses, then to intensive or series in-services, then to shorter in-services, then conferences, then reference ratings, then work experience
5. **Identify gaps** i.e., competency areas where you feel you have not yet had enough specialized education or in-service training
6. **Find in-service training opportunities** to help you fill in any identified gaps in the knowledge/skill areas. Information about relevant training opportunities can be found at <https://massaimh.org/introduction-massaimh-competency-guidelines-endorsement/>.

Theoretical Foundations	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
pregnancy and early parenthood			
infant/young child development and behavior			
infant/young child & family-centered practice			
relationship-based, therapeutic practice			
family relationships & dynamics			
attachment, separation, trauma & loss			
disorders of infancy/early childhood			
cultural competence			

Law, Regulation & Policy	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
ethical practice			
government, law & regulation			
agency policy			

Systems Expertise	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
service delivery systems			
community resources			

Direct Service Skills	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
observation & listening			

screening & assessment			
responding with empathy			
advocacy			
life skills			
safety			

Working with Others	Education	Work	In-service training(s)	RSC
building & maintaining relationships				
supporting others				
mentoring				
collaborating				
resolving conflict				
empathy & compassion				

Communicating	Education	Work	In-service training(s)	RSC
listening				
speaking				
writing				

Thinking	Education	Work	In-service training(s)	RSC
analyzing information				
solving problems				
exercising sound judgment				

maintaining perspective				
planning & organizing				

Reflection	Education	Work	In-service training(s)	RSC
contemplation				
self awareness				
curiosity				
professional/personal development				
emotional response				