



## **Getting Started Form for Category III: Infant or Early Childhood Mental Health 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, a 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 Mental Health Specialist (IMHS) or Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist (ECMHS).
4. **Keep in mind** that during a formal Application review, a minimum of two trained Reviewers will comprehensively examine your materials and come to agreement about whether or not you have met the requirements and the 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/>.

<b>Theoretical Foundations</b>	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			
psychotherapeutic & behavioral theories of change			
disorders of infancy/early childhood			
mental & behavioral disorders-adults			
cultural competence			

<b>Law, Regulation &amp; Policy</b>	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
ethical practice			
government, law & regulation			
agency policy			

<b>Systems Expertise</b>	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
service delivery systems			
community resources			

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<b>Direct Service Skills</b>	Education	Work	In-service training(s)
observation & listening			
screening & assessment			
responding with empathy			
intervention/treatment planning			
developmental guidance			
supportive counseling			
parent-infant/very young child relationship-based therapies & practices			
advocacy			
life skills			
safety			

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

<b>Communicating</b>	Education	Work	In-service training(s)	RSC
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listening				
speaking				
writing				

<b>Thinking</b>	Education	Work	In-service training(s)	RSC
analyzing information				
solving problems				
exercising sound judgment				
maintaining perspective				
planning & organizing				

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