

## Traditional Health Worker Certification **FAQ**: Frequently asked Questions & Answers.

### 1. How can someone become certified as Traditional Health Worker Program?

- a. Complete an Oregon Health Authority (OHA) - Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) approved training for Peer Wellness Specialist (PWS), Peer Support Specialist (PSS), Community Health Worker (CHW), Patient Health Navigators (PHN), and Doulas. Look for your specific specialty training. The list of approved trainings programs can be found at this link <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/amh/pd/Pages/approved-training.aspx>

*Please Note: There is more than one page so click to the next page*

### 2. Who is eligible to become a Traditional Health Worker?

- a. Traditional Health Workers (THWs) help individuals in their communities, providing physical and behavioral health services. There are five (5) Traditional Health Worker types:
  - i. **Community Health Workers (CHW)**: Assist community members in receiving the healthcare they need.
  - ii. **Peer Support Specialists (PSS)**: Provide support, encouragement and assistance to addictions and mental health consumers.
  - iii. **Peer Wellness Specialists (PWS)**: Provide support, encouragement and assistance to address physical and mental health needs.
  - iv. **Personal Health Navigators (NAV)**: Provide care coordination for members from within the health system.
  - v. **Birth Doulas**: Provide companionship and personal, nonmedical support to women and families throughout the childbirth and post-partum experience.

### 3. After I finish my training hour's requirements, what's next in the certification process?

- a. Complete the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) certification application. An individual can submit application via email as well as hard copy applications. Submit application to:  
Traditional Health Worker Program  
OHA Office of Equity and Inclusion  
421 S.W. Oak St., Suite 750  
Portland OR 97204  
Email [thw.program@state.or.us](mailto:thw.program@state.or.us) or fax: 971-673-1128
- b. For more information, here is the link on how to become certified including the application <http://www.oregon.gov/OHA/oei/pages/index.aspx>
- c. Completed applications can also be emailed to [THW.program@state.or.us](mailto:THW.program@state.or.us)

### 4. What are the documents required for Certification?

- a. Traditional Health Program application; fully completed, signed, and dated
- b. Copy of completion certificate from an OHA-approved training program



- c. Clear copy of a government-issued identification (state IDs, Driver License, and passport)
- 5. After I submit my application to OHA (OEI) - what happens to my application?**
  - a. OHA/OEI staff will start application process. First, they will internally build profile for the applicants, and place them in queue. Secondly, OHA-OEI staff will send the applicant's information to the state Background Check Unit (BCU). Third, the BCU will send an email to the applicants. **All BCU correspondence is done via email.** The applicant has 21 days to respond to those emails or their background check application will close.
- 6. Is the background check free?**
  - a. Yes, the cost of background check is totally free for individuals and is 100% paid by the state.
- 7. What happens when an individual applicant has a criminal background?**
  - a. An applicant can do a weigh test. The "weigh test" allows people who have a criminal history to continue the important work they do within our health care system. They will have to provide and share their recovery story including a letter of recommendations for reference.  
Please Note: See the OEI Website resource list for more information
- 8. What happens next after someone gets approved or denied by the Background Check Unit?**
  - a. If someone is approved, OEI staff will send a letter notifying them of the approval
  - b. If someone is denied, the Background Check Unit will mail them a letter explaining the decisions behind the denial.
- 9. How long is traditional health worker certification good for?**
  - a. Traditional Health Worker certification is good for three years (**36 months**).
- 10. When and how does someone need to renew their certification?**
  - a. Individuals will need to submit renewal application 60 days before their current certification expires. (THW application; check "renewal" box at the top of the application).
  - b. They will be required to earn and document 20 continuing education hours during their renewal process. All that information can be found on our OHA/OEI Website at <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Pages/thw-certification.aspx>
  - c. Another background check will be ran at that time.
- 11. Are there other avenues for individuals with addictions recovery and with criminal records to get certified?**
  - a. Yes, individuals have a choice to be certified through the Addiction Counseling Board of Oregon (ACCBO) which will send the information to OEI. <http://www.accbo.com/>