



## NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

### Endorsement FAQs

#### **What is the New York State Association for Infant Mental Health?**

- NYS–AIMH is the statewide organization for multidisciplinary professionals who work to support the relational and emotional development of families from pregnancy through early childhood. We are focused on professional development and education, public awareness and advocacy, and endorsement of professionals in the areas of infant and early childhood mental health, learning and development.

#### **What is the NYS–AIMH Endorsement®?**

- Endorsement is a process that supports and recognizes the development of professionals who work with or on behalf of infants, toddlers, and their families. This process uses a nationally recognized set of competencies that helps define best practice and guides professional growth.

#### **Who can apply?**

- All professionals who have experience working with or on behalf of infants, toddlers, parents/caregivers and meet the educational, work, training, and reflective supervision/consultation requirements as specified at each level.

#### **How do I get started with an Endorsement Application?**

- Become a NYS-AIMH in order to apply for Endorsement: [NYS-AIMH Membership](#)
- Register on EASy to begin an Endorsement application: [EASy](#)

#### **Why apply for the NYS–AIMH Endorsement (IMH-E®)?**

- To grow and develop as a professional in the rapidly expanding infant, young child, and family service field
- To be recognized by employers and peers for having attained a level of competency in culturally sensitive, relationship-focused practice that promotes infant mental health
- To better support the infants, toddlers, families, students, agencies, and institutions in the promotion of infant mental health.

#### **What are the benefits of our NYS-AIMH Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement®?**

- Competency & Professionalism: Endorsements validate your skills and knowledge in a particular field. They indicate that you have met a certain standard of competence, which can lend credibility and demonstrate professionalism.
- Career Advancement: Endorsements can lead to career advancement opportunities. They can make you more appealing to employers, potentially leading to increased job opportunities, higher salaries, or promotions.



- **Continuous Learning:** The process of earning an endorsement often involves ongoing learning and professional development. This can help you stay current with the latest research, strategies, and best practices in your field.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Pursuing an endorsement can also provide networking opportunities. Professionals can connect with others in their field who are also pursuing endorsements, leading to potential collaborations or sharing of knowledge and experiences.
- **Improved Outcomes for Children:** Ultimately, the knowledge and skills gained through earning an endorsement can lead to improved outcomes for children. Professionals who are knowledgeable and competent in their field are better equipped to provide high-quality care and education.
- **Increased Confidence:** Earning an endorsement can also increase confidence in your abilities. This boost in confidence can improve job performance and satisfaction. While also giving you the tools needed to offer your best work.
- **Recognition of Specialized Skills:** In early childhood careers, endorsements can highlight your specialized skills, knowledge, and expertise in working with infants, children, their families, or the broader community. These skills can be applied to either the micro or macro setting.
- **Broadened Impact & Reach:** Endorsements in early childhood mental health can significantly amplify your positive impact. This enhanced understanding and refined skills, combined with a reputable endorsement, can enable you to better serve not only children in need but also the community at large, potentially influencing policy and practice on a broader scale.

#### **How much does Endorsement cost?**

- Fees range from \$90.00-\$550.00 based upon which category you apply for. There are three fees in its entirety, the membership fee and application fee are due when you register on EASy. Once you build your application, the processing fee will be applied when you are ready to submit for review. In order to maintain your Endorsement, it is required that you renew your \$50.00 NYS-AIMH membership each year.

#### **When can I apply?**

- The application process is ongoing and you can apply at any time.

#### **What is involved in the Endorsement process?**

- Register on the Endorsement Application System (EASy). When registering on EASy, it is strongly recommended that you register using a personal email address (e.g., Gmail, yahoo, Hotmail, etc.). Employer email servers often block messages sent by EASy
- EASy will email you a temporary password to the email address you indicated on your registration. This email will be your username.
- Build your professional application, including work, in-service training, and supervisory experiences. This reflects your capabilities within the infant, young child, and family field
- You will be asked to list the names and email addresses for the 3 individuals who will complete reference rating forms on your behalf. EASy will send an email to each



reference rater; the whole process is done electronically. Please ask your reference raters for a personal email address so they will receive the secure link to complete the form on EASy

- Once your application is complete you may “Submit” by clicking the button that appears on your EASy dashboard.
- Infant/Early Childhood Family Associate, Infant/Early Childhood Family Specialist and Endorsed Reflective Supervisor applicants receive an Endorsement decision after at least one trained reviewer, who has earned Endorsement, examines, and approves the application
- Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist & Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Mentor applicants move on to the written Endorsement exam after at least one trained reviewer, who has earned Endorsement, examines and approves their application.
- Endorsement!

#### **How do I ask for help while completing the Endorsement process?**

- If you have questions while in your EASy application, there are comment boxes within every tab of the Endorsement application where applicants can ask questions or leave remarks. You can also email your Endorsement Coordinator - [endorsement@nysaimh.org](mailto:endorsement@nysaimh.org) with questions or register for Office Hours: [Office Hours](#)

#### **What is the difference between IMH-E® and ECMH-E®?**

- There are two separate Endorsement® credentials: the IMH-E® credential and the ECMH-E® credential. The competencies found within the Competency Guidelines® are the same for both IMH-E® and ECMH-E® applicants. It's the work experience that separates the two credentials and determines which one is the best fit for applicants.
  - The IMH-E® is intended for professionals who work with IMH principles in mind and have work experience, past or present, that is specific to pregnant women, babies, toddlers (0 up to 3 years of age) and their families.
  - ECMH-E® is for professionals who work with IECMH principles in mind and have work experience, past or present, that is specific to children aged 3 up to 6 years old and their families.

#### **What field of practice typically aligns with each category?**

- There are four categories of IMH-E® and ECMH-E® that span across various types of work experience.
  - Infant/Early Childhood Family Associate can be most appropriate for those in promotion
  - Infant/Early Childhood Family Specialist can be an appropriate fit for those whose work has been in prevention.
  - Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist typically fits those who perform IECMH treatment and intervention
  - Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Mentor is an appropriate fit for applicants with leadership experience in IECMH-informed supervision, policy development, program management, research and higher education instruction.



### **What are the Competency Guidelines and where can it be found?**

- The Infant Family Specialist Competency Guidelines were developed by the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health to clearly describe the areas of expertise, responsibilities, and behaviors that demonstrate competency for each category. We recommend reviewing the Competency Guidelines: [Competency Guidelines](#)

### **What is the Endorsement Registry and where can it be found?**

- The Endorsement Registry is a list of currently Endorsed individuals who have demonstrated specialized experiences in the infant/early childhood field. We recommend using our Endorsement registry: [Endorsement Registry](#)

### **What is an Endorsed Reflective Supervisor (ERS) Add-on?**

- Endorsed Reflective Supervisor is an add-on that exclusively captures the expertise of RSC that is available for the Family Specialist and Mental Health Specialist categories.

### **Are there any inservice training, conferences, or courses that are mandatory while working towards Endorsement?**

- **Initial application:**
  - We do not require any specific training, conferences, or courses to earn Endorsement! And your training never expires for your initial application! You will be required to indicate a minimum of 33 hours of in-service training. (must include 3 hours of DEIBA training). DEIBA is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, Acceptance.
- **For renewal:**
  - 12 hours of reflective supervision from the current year for Family Specialist, Mental Health Specialist, Mental Health Mentor-C and ERS only
  - 15 hours of I/ECMH continued training from the current year (must include 1 hour of DEIBA training). DEIBA is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, Acceptance.

### **I don't know anyone who is endorsed to fill out my reference rating form**

- Most Endorsement applicants know at least one person in the state who is Endorsed, they just might not know that they are! We recommend starting with our Endorsement registry: [Endorsement Registry](#). You can view Endorsed professionals by category and region in NY.

### **How do I count reflective consultation or RSC?**

- Each hour of Reflective Supervision Consultation (RSC) you attend, group or individual, with a qualified provider, counts towards Endorsement. If your team meets with an endorsed consultant, you can count the hours of time that you spend with the consultant, even if you are not the identified presenter. For example, if you meet and participate in case consultations once a month for two hours, you will have 24 hours of RSC after one year that meets the criteria for Endorsement.

### **Who is considered a qualified provider of RSC?**

- A qualified provider of RSC is someone who is endorsed as Family Specialist with the Endorsed Reflective Supervisor add-on (ERS), Mental Health Specialist with the Endorsed Reflective Supervisor add-on (ERS) or Mental Health Mentor-Clinical. Your



provider might have been vetted as qualified by NYS-AIMH in the past. Those hours will also count BUT only during the time vetting is active. Vetting status will expire 12/31/2024

### **What happens after I submit my application for review?**

- All applications are carefully reviewed by a trained application reviewer who has earned Endorsement. The application reviewer will examine your transcripts, reference rating forms, and qualifying specialized work, in-service training, and RSC experiences. Then they will make a recommendation about whether to recommend your application for Endorsement, to approve you to sit for the Endorsement exam, or may suggest that you pursue further work, training and/or RSC experiences and then have your application re-reviewed after a period of time. This Process can take up to 4 weeks.

### **When are exams for the Endorsement offered?**

- Exams are offered on a monthly basis via the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health's online proctoring system Question Mark

### **What are the steps after I am approved to sit for the Exam (IMHS/IMHM)**

- Your application will be approved and you will receive an approval letter via email with instructions on how to purchase the exam through the Alliance.

### **What is the format of the exam?**

- The exam is divided into two parts.
- Part One (60 Multiple Choice Questions – 90 minutes)  
The multiple-choice, or quantitative, section is primarily focused on infant and early childhood mental health knowledge specific to work with infants, young children, and their families. Most questions will be related to direct service, but there will be some questions related to reflective supervision/consultation, policy, and research. The multiple-choice section is the same for all Specialist and Mentor applicants. Knowledge gained through coursework, specialized in-service training, and self-study will be most useful in this section of the exam. IMH-E applicants are expected to have knowledge on pregnant people, infants, young children (up to age 3), and families. ECMH-E applicants are expected to have knowledge on pregnant women, infants, young children (up to age 6), and families.
- Part Two (Vignettes – 90 minutes)  
The qualitative section will ask for responses to vignettes. This section is intended to measure the applicant's capacity to apply their knowledge of IECMH principles into practice and to demonstrate a reflective, relationship-based approach. While all of the competency areas are important, the ones under the Reflection, Thinking, and Working with Others domains are important to the qualitative section for Specialists and Mentors - Clinical.

### **How do I indicate that I have earned the Endorsement?**

- The Infant Mental Health Endorsement® (IMH-E®) and Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® (ECMH-E®) marks indicate that a person has earned Endorsement. Use



of the registered trademark is important (whenever possible) to distinguish from other systems of “endorsement.”

### **When do I have to renew my Endorsement?**

- Renewal is completed at the end of each calendar year to maintain Endorsement. The only exception is the year an individual becomes Endorsed (ex. Awarded Endorsement on 6/01/2024. Renewal is due at the end of each calendar year beginning 2025)

### **What does the Endorsement renewal process look like?**

- Endorsed professionals must maintain NYS-AIMH membership each year.
- Endorsed professionals must maintain Endorsement via EASy each year.
  - Login to [EASy](#) and click on Endorsement > My Endorsements.
  - Select the application you need to renew by clicking "Edit Details". You do not need to start a new application to renew.
  - **Details tab:** Ensure your information, including email address, mailing address, *membership expiration date* (must manually update) etc., is up to date
  - **Ethics tab:** Read and initial each statement.
  - **Training tab:** Must obtain 15 hours of I/ECMH continued training from the current year; this must include 1 hour of DEIBA training (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, Acceptance.)
  - **Supervision tab:** 12 hours of reflective supervision from the current year for Family Specialist, Mental Health Specialist, and Mental Health Mentor only.
  - **Status tab:** Click submit!
  - Endorsement is designed to support the continued growth of the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health workforce. Make sure you connect training opportunities and a reflective supervisor NOW so that you are ready for the end of year renewal.

### **Do my renewal training hours have to come from the year I am renewing in, or can I use old training that I didn't enter when I applied for Endorsement?**

- For renewal, you must enter training from the current calendar year. We want to ensure that Endorsed professionals continue to seek out training and grow in the field of infant and early childhood mental health!

### **What does Endorsement renewal look like if I am Endorsement in more than one pathway/category?**

- If you are Endorsed in more than one category of Endorsement with the same age group, you only have to renew the Endorsement with the most requirements. For example, if you are Endorsed at IFA and IFS, you will only renew IFS because it has more requirements than IFA.
- If you are endorsed in IMH-E® and ECMH-E®, you must renew both Endorsements to remain dually endorsed. The new “Copy to..” feature in EASy simplifies this process. Once you add your updated training and reflective supervision hours in one application, you can click “Copy to..” on each new entry to send it to your other applications.