



Overview of Maine Community Health Worker Certification

The Maine Community Health Worker Certification, launched in February 2026, provides statewide recognition of community health worker (CHW) competencies, aligns with national standards, and supports the professionalization of the workforce. The certification process is voluntary and includes meeting eligibility criteria by completing required training, demonstrating experience, and passing an assessment administered through approved bodies. This certification is overseen by the Maine Community Health Worker Certification Board, with support from the Maine Community Health Worker Initiative.

Purpose

The purpose of certification is to establish clear standards for Community Health Worker practice, training, and competency in order to improve access to care, reduce health disparities, and promote community well-being.

History

The Maine Community Health Worker Initiative began in 2013 as a workforce development effort to strengthen the CHW profession in Maine. As the Initiative's network expanded, they commissioned a report on advancing CHW certification and convened CHWs to establish certification components. After a decade of work, the Initiative launched a committee in 2024 to design and implement a certification program for CHWs across Maine.



Value of Certification for CHWs

Certification provides CHWs with new skills, clearer role definition, and improved work performance. It supports establishing better coverage of CHW services through insurance or other payers, increases respect from other professionals, helps secure more sustainable funding, and improves integration of CHWs into care teams. Certification expands CHW responsibilities, enhances career advancement opportunities, and strengthens the trust and respect of the individuals they serve.

Value for Organizations

Organizations benefit from integrating certified CHWs into care teams as they improve service delivery and enhance employer confidence in patient support. Certified CHWs elevate organizational reputation, contribute to better health outcomes, increase income and reduce debt through improved care coordination, and help reduce emergency room visits while overall increasing access to care.