

Nephrology Social Work Certification (NSW-C)

Frequently Asked Questions

How much does the NSW-C application cost?

New certification: \$90 Renewal certification: \$65

How long does the NSW-C credential last?

Certification is for 3 years, and each renewal is for 3 years.

Do I have to apply online?

Yes, all applicants need to use the online system. If you have questions or need assistance in completing the application, email membership@kidney.org or call 888.562.6653 and ask to speak with the Professional Membership Manager.

Do I send in information as I get it?

No. All information and documentation should be uploaded at the same time to avoid any mix-up or mismatching of documentation.

I don't work in a dialysis unit or with kidney transplant program will my position count as working as a Nephrology Social Worker?

Most NSW-C recipients are currently working in a dialysis and/or kidney transplant setting and have at least 2 years nephrology experience. If you are in another setting and work with a significant number of people with advanced kidney disease, the NSW-C Board can review your setting on a case-by-case basis.

Does my internship count toward the 2-year requirement?

No. We consider your nephrology experience starting when you are working independently under your own licensure.

Do I need to be licensed in my state to apply?

All applicants must be licensed through their state licensing entity in the state(s)/country in which they practice.

I am currently working on obtaining my state license. Do I have to wait to apply for the NSW-C?

Yes. Please wait to submit your application until you have confirmation of your license.

Who has access to this information?

Your application is confidential and only the NSW-C Board member reviewing your application will have access to the information.

What about CEUs?

CEUs are to be submitted on the online Continuing Education Units Record document as part of the application. The Board will send back the application to the applicant if this form is not used.

- New applicants will submit **20 hours** of continuing education credits within the **last 24 months**, with **10** of those hours being **nephrology**-specific, and **3** of those hours must be in **ethics**.
- Renewing applicants, will submit **30 hours** of continuing education during the **last 3 years**, with **10** of those hours being **nephrology**-specific and **3** of those hours must be in **ethics**.

How can I get Nephrology specific CEUs?

We have accepted CEUs from the following:

- Program sponsored by NKF or one of its affiliates
- Programs where the CEUs were provided by CNSW, including online CEUs through PERC
- Education provided by Dialysis Corporations or Transplant Programs
- Renal Network
- American Kidney Fund
- Society of Transplant Social Workers, when the content included kidney transplant
- Medical Education Institute (MEI)

If we have questions about the CEUs, we will request additional clarification.

I don't have 3 nephrology social workers where I work. What are some options to have Competency Forms completed?

Two of the evaluations must be by licensed nephrology social workers. One may be from another nephrology professional or social worker outside the field of nephrology.

Some suggestions for the social worker evaluations:

- A corporate nephrology social work director who is familiar with your work.
- A nephrology social worker in your local CNSW chapter with whom you have worked or discussed cases.
- A nephrology social worker (even out of state) with whom you have worked and consulted on transient or transplant situations.
- A nephrology social worker who is willing to discuss (in person or by phone) your cases in terms of the skills criteria.
- A kidney transplant social worker who is willing to discuss (in person or by phone) your cases in terms of the skills criteria.
- A nephrology social worker with whom you worked in the past.
- A NKF Division/Affiliate social work staff member familiar with your work.
- A Renal Network social worker familiar with your work.
- Form a conference call "professional consultation group." Document the calls and, when comfortable, participants can evaluate each other.

Any of the NSW-C Board members will be glad to talk with you about your specific situation and help you determine who might be an appropriate individual to approach your evaluations.

Can my Competency Form be completed by a retiree or someone who is no longer in nephrology?

We may accept competency forms completed by a retired nephrology social worker or those who are no longer working in nephrology; however, they will need to submit a copy of their most recent resume or CV and these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

My hospital/facility is paying my certification fee. How is that handled?

You have 2 options:

- Pay with your own funds and seek reimbursement.
- Contact membership@kidney.org for assistance.

Please note – application fee is non-refundable.

What happens if I do not renew my NSW-C?

We ask you to stop including the certification on your business cards and signature lines. On your resume, you should only include the range of years that you were certified.

My NSW-C lapsed, what are my next steps?

If your NSW-C has been lapsed for over a year, you will need to restart the application process including the 3 Competency Summaries, CEU sheet, and pay the initial enrollment fees.

I haven't been getting any emails about my NSW-C, what happened?

Some corporate email servers may identify emails from organizations like NKF as "spam." Some people prefer to use personal email addresses or consider marking future NKF emails as "never block sender" or "not junk email".

What if I still have questions?

As the NSW-C Board members are volunteers and managing the applications in addition to their regular caseload, we ask the questions start through the NKF Professional Membership team at membership@kidney.org.