



VAIMH Endorsement®

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Mentor-Clinical (I/ECMHM-C)

Leaders and Mentors in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

This category of Endorsement is for leaders and mentors in the field of infant and/or early childhood mental health and who provide reflective supervision and consultation to practitioners in the I/ECMH-family field.

“Mental Health Mentor - Clinical professionals provide treatment/clinical intervention to the infant/young child and their caregiver together when IECMH disorders exist or when a caregiver’s mental or behavioral disorder affects their relationship with the infant/young child. They use their IECMH expertise to address identified social-emotional and treatment needs through direct clinical intervention. Mental Health Mentor-Clinical professionals also provide IECMH Reflective Supervision/Consultation.” – The Alliance

Education

Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MS), Master of Education (MEd), Doctorate in Education (EdD), Master of Social Work (MSW), Master of Nursing (MSN), Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Osteopathy (DO), Medical Degree (MD) or other degree specific to one’s professional focus in IECMH, post-graduate specialization, or university certified program in accordance with the Competency Guidelines.

Work Experience:

Meets specialized work experience criteria plus 3 years post-graduate experience providing IECMH reflective supervision/consultation.

2-years post-graduate supervised work experience as a licensed infant/early childhood mental health therapist delivering culturally sensitive, relationship-focused parent-infant or parent-child psychotherapy - a dyadic mental health treatment aimed at enhancing the parent-infant/child attachment relationship and optimal infant/child development.

Work experience must be with both the infant/toddler (birth to 36 months) and/or young child (3-6 years), and their biological, foster, or adoptive parent on behalf of the parent-child relationship.

These therapies and practices are intended to explicitly address issues related to attachment, separation, trauma, and unresolved grief and loss as they affect the attachment relationship, development, behavior, and care of the infant/child. The unresolved losses, or "ghosts," might be from adverse childhood experiences that occurred during the caregivers' own early childhood or may be related to more current circumstances for the infant/child and family, such as a difficult labor and delivery. Strong feelings, such as grief and loss, could also be associated with diagnosis or manifestation of a chronic illness, delay, or disability.

Leadership

Minimum 3-years of practice leader experience relevant to the infant, young child-family field.

- Leadership activities may be demonstrated through paid **and** unpaid work experience.
- The list below is meant to demonstrate some of the activities in which leaders might engage and is not comprehensive. Also, applicants would not need to engage in all the activities listed in order to earn Endorsement as an I/ECMHM.

Examples:

- Organize and facilitate reflective practice groups and/or IECMH study groups.
- Participate in system of care planning initiatives.
- Participate in planning for regional, statewide, or national IECMH-specific conferences.
- Represent IECMH interests in planning for national early childhood, social service, child welfare, behavioral health and public health conferences.
- Work to increase the preference for endorsed personnel in contracts for services, childcare rating schemes.
- Work to address reimbursement issues for IECMH services.
- Serve in a leadership role or as an active committee member in local/state AIMH association.
- Volunteer contributions that promote IECMH.
- Provide training on IECMH principles and/or practices to local, regional, state, and/or national groups.
- Teach about IECMH principles and practices at a college or university.
- Serve as an Endorsement ambassador, application advisor or reviewer, or exam reviewer for local/state AIMH association.

Trainings

Minimum 30 clock hours of relationship-based training/continuing education that meet competencies as specified in the Competency Guidelines. <https://www.vaimh.org/competency-guidelines>

Training content will encompass the promotion of social-emotional development and the relationship-based principles and practices of I/ECMH. In addition to the 30 clock hours of relationship-based training/continuing education, the following are also requirements:

- 3 hours of training must be dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion in infant/early childhood mental health;
- 15 hours of didactic training about the provision of RS/C;
- Typically, successful MHM applications include an **average of 75 or more** hours of specialized training.

Reflective Supervision

Minimum requirement of 50 clock hours received of relationship-focused, reflective supervision/consultation (RSC), *post Master's*, individually, or in a group while also providing RSC to infant/young child-family professionals.

***A minimum of 25 of the hours received must be about the RSC you provide to others.**

Your provider of RSC must be endorsed as an I/ECMHM-C.

As in relationship-focused practice with families, RSC is most effective when it occurs in the context of a relationship that has an opportunity to develop by meeting regularly with the same supervisor/consultant over a period of time.

Peer supervision (defined as colleagues meeting together without an identified supervisor/consultant to guide the reflective process), while valuable for many experienced practitioners, **does not** meet the RSC criteria for Endorsement as specified in the Competency Guidelines.

I/ECMHM-C applicants will receive RSC with the focus on the complexity of supervising others to provide relationship-based services to infants, toddlers, and their families in addition to receiving RSC that is focused on their direct service work with infants, toddlers, and/or young children and their caregivers/families.

References *(this is the last step in the Endorsement Application process)*

Total of three professional reference ratings from:

1. (1) from current program supervisor
2. (1) from person providing reflective supervision/consultation (RSC) to you
3. (1) from person receiving RSC from you

Exam

YES

Annual Renewal

Applicants *(those in process of attaining Endorsement)*: <https://www.vaimh.org/vaimh-membership>

1. Renew VAIMH Membership annually by December 31.

Endorsees *(those already Endorsed)*:

Endorsees commit to the ongoing process dedicated to annual professional development as it relates to IECMH principles through:

1. **VAIMH Membership Renewal:** <https://www.vaimh.org/vaimh-membership>
 - annually by December 31
2. **Training/Professional Development:** <https://www.vaimh.org/endorsement-renewal>
 - minimum of 12 training hours received per year of relationship-based education and training pertaining to the promotion of social-emotional development and/or the practice of IECMH.
 - minimum of 3 hours of training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in IECMH.
 - minimum of 3 hours of training on the provision of RS.
3. **Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RS/C):**
 - minimum of 12 hours of RS/C (group or individual) from an endorsed Mental Health Mentor-Clinical (MHM-C) provider.
 - the RS/C you receive should also focus on the RSC you provide to others.

Endorsements are renewed every three years (beginning in 2024). In 2027 endorsees will attest to having received 45(+) hours of training and 36(+) hours of RS/C between January 1, 2025 - December 31, 2027. These hours will be prorated for applicants who earn Endorsement in the “in-between” years.