Infant Mental Health Specialist (IMHS)

**IMH Specialist Requirements**

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| **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), Medical Doctor (MD), Doctor of Osteopathy (DO) or other degree specific to one’s professional focus in infant mental health; university certificate program, and/or course work in areas such as infant/very young child development, family-centered practice, cultural sensitivity, family relationships and dynamics, assessment, and intervention, in accordance with MI-AIMH Training Guidelines and Endorsement® Competencies. Official transcript(s) required. |
| **Training** | Applicants will include as many hours as necessary to document that competencies (as specified in Competency Guidelines®) have been met. Minimum 30 clock hours of relationship-based education and training pertaining to the promotion of social-emotional development and/or the practice of infant mental health. Typically, successful IMHS applications include an average of 75 or more hours of specialized training unless the applicant has completed coursework specific to IMH competencies |
| **Specialized Work Experience** | 2 years, post-graduate, supervised work experiences providing culturally sensitive, relationship-focused, infant mental health services. This specialized work experience must be with both the infant/toddler and his/her biological, foster, or adoptive parent on behalf of the parent-infant relationship. IMH services will include concrete assistance, advocacy, emotional support, developmental guidance, early relationship assessment, and parent-infant/young child relationship-based therapies and practices (may include but are not limited to parent-infant psychotherapy, interaction guidance, and child-parent psychotherapy). These therapies and practices are intended to explore issues related to attachment, separation, trauma and unresolved losses as they affect the development, behavior and care of the infant/young child.\*  The work that meets this criteria may be performed by professionals from a variety of disciplines, not only licensed mental health professionals. However, the applicant will need to have received the training necessary to provide this level of intervention AND receive RSC from a qualified professional, endorsed at IMHS or IMHM-C, about the intervention. We acknowledge that it may be easier for a licensed mental health professional to find paid work in a program that provides this level of intervention. But professionals from other disciplines are not excluded from earning Endorsement® at IMHS if they meet the criteria.   OR  In some cases, 1 year of a supervised graduate internship with direct IMH practice experience as described above may be counted toward the 2 years paid work experience requirement if the supervisor of the internship is endorsed at IMHS or IMHM-C. Applicant will submit description of internship for application reviewers’ consideration. |
| **Reflective Supervision/Consultation** | Relationship-focused, reflective supervision/consultation, individually or in a group, post-Masters, while providing services to infants, very young children, and families. Provider of reflective supervision/consultation must have earned Endorsement® at IMHS or IMHM-Clinical. Minimum: 50 clock hours within a one- to two-year timeframe. |
| **Professional Reference Ratings Please note: At least one rating must come from someone Endorsed at IFS, IMHS, or IMHM.** | Total of three ratings:   1. One from current program supervisor 2. One from person providing reflective supervision/consultation 3. One from another supervisor, teacher, trainer, or consultant; colleague; or supervisee (if applicant is a supervisor). |
| **Code of Ethics Statement & Endorsement® Agreement** | Signed. |
| **Documentation of Competencies** | 1. Application will document that competencies have been adequately met through course work, in-service training, and reflective supervision/consultation experiences. 2. Successful completion of the MI-AIMH written examination. |
| **Professional Membership** | Membership in MI-AIMH or another infant mental health association. |

*\*Infant mental health services that meet IMHS specialized work criteria are provided by professionals whose role includes intervention or treatment of the child’s primary caregiving relationship (ie, biological, foster, or adoptive parent or guardian); these experiences are critical to the development of a specialization in infant mental health. The Infant Family Specialist Endorsement® is broader and includes practitioners whose work experiences come solely from programs that provide education/support/consultation to early care and education providers or whose intent is primarily to educate parents.*

**Annual Endorsement® Renewal Requirements (IMHS)**

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| **Education and Training** | Minimum of 15 clock hours per year of relationship-based education and training, pertaining to the promotion of social-emotional development and/or the practice of infant mental health (e.g. regional training, related course work at colleges or universities, infant mental health conference attendance, participation in IMH association-sponsored activities such as book club, mentorship group). For those who earn Endorsement® at IMHS and provide RSC to others, at least three of the hours of specialized training must be about RSC. |
| **Professional Membership** | Annual renewal of membership in MI-AIMH or another infant mental health association. |
| **Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RSC)** | CT-AIMH requires that all professionals endorsed at IMHS receive a minimum of 12 hours of RSC annually. |