



Department of Health
and Human Services

*Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

Paul R. LePage, Governor

Ricker Hamilton, Commissioner

SIMPLE STEPS TO MENTAL HEALTH REHABILITATION TECHNICIAN I (MHRT I) CERTIFICATION APRIL 2018



Produced by the University of Southern Maine, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service, Center for Learning in collaboration with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

SIMPLE STEPS TO MHRT I CERTIFICATION

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SIMPLE STEPS TO MHRT I CERTIFICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION:

USM Muskie School-Center for Learning
12 East Chestnut St.
Augusta, ME 04330
Website: <http://cfl-muskie.org/>

Scott Bernier: 626-5280 or sbernier@maine.edu
Jeanne Hackett: 626-5002 or jeanne.hackett@maine.edu
CFL Fax: 626-5022

NEW APPLICANT—ISSUING A PROVISIONAL MHRT I:

1. Review the applicant's resume/job application. Have they ever worked for another mental health agency?
 - a. **YES:** Have they ever been issued a Provisional MHRT I or a Full MHRT I? If unsure, notify CFL to check the MHRT database. Provide the first/last name of the individual and a middle name/initial if available. If the individual has had a name change (marriage or divorce), please also include their previous name. If it is found that the individual has not been issued a Full or Provisional MHRT I, you can issue a Provisional MHRT I. Continue to Step 2 below. If they have been issued a certificate in the past, please see page 2 under "NEW APPLICANT WHO ALREADY HAS A CERTIFICATE"
 - b. **NO:** Contact CFL to check the MHRT database for the individual as in 1a above. If the individual has had a name change (marriage or divorce), please also include their previous name. If it is found that the individual has not been issued a Full or Provisional MHRT I, you can issue a Provisional MHRT I. Continue to Step 2 below. If the applicant has been issued a certificate in the past, please see page 2 under "NEW APPLICANT WHO ALREADY HAS A CERTIFICATE"
2. Review the *2006 Provisional Mental Health Support Specialist (MHSS) Handbook* with the new employee. The instructions in the manual state the new employee's supervisor should do this. Some agencies have HR do this. Please keep this consistent within your agency to make it easier to track and confirm that the process has been completed. A copy of the handbook is maintained in both Word and Adobe PDF formats on the CFL website at: <http://cfl-muskie.org/> Click the FORMS link.
3. After reviewing the handbook with the new employee, the reviewer (supervisor or HR representative) completes a *Provisional MHRT I Form* found in the back of the handbook. It can also be downloaded from the link in Step 2. The supervisor (or HR representative) completes the top portion of the form and indicates the effective date (usually date of hire) and expiration date (one year after the effective date) in the appropriate spaces. The supervisor and new employee must sign the form. A sample completed form is shown in Appendix A at the end of this guide. **TIP:** The Word version of the form on the CFL website can be filled-out before printing, ensuring everything except signatures is legible.
4. Forward the Provisional MHRT I form to the address at the bottom of the form for approval by CFL. Multiple forms can be submitted at the same time for review. Please submit the form via mail, fax, or scanned as an email attachment. **Please note:** *The signed form must be submitted to CFL as soon as possible and not more than 30 days after the effective date.*
5. Once approved and signed, CFL will return a copy to the agency. It is considered effective the date the agency indicated (step 3).
6. Make a copy and provide it to the new employee for their records. Make sure they understand that they do not need to forward a copy to CFL as that has already been done.

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NEW APPLICANT WHO ALREADY HAS A CERTIFICATE:

A. New Applicant who was issued a Provisional MHRT I in the past:

A new hire who has either indicated they've had a Provisional MHRT I in the past or that CFL has found in their records has had a Provisional MHRT I in the past, might still be eligible for a new Provisional MHRT I. A Provisional MHRT I is valid for 12 months and it does not need to be 12 consecutive months. For example, the individual could work at Agency A for five months, leave that agency and eventually be hired by Agency B. Agency B can issue a certificate valid for seven months (the balance of time remaining). Here are the steps to do this:

1. Contact the agency that previously employed the applicant and obtain written documentation of the employee's severance date.
2. Determine how much time remains from the employee's original Provisional MHRT I. You may contact CFL for this (per page 1) if the applicant isn't sure when their Provisional was issued. As long as they have not used all 12 months, you may issue a new Provisional for the time remaining.
3. Submit to CFL: the new Provisional MHRT I covering the time remaining, a copy of the written documentation in step 1 and a simple cover letter indicating you're requesting a Provisional MHRT I for the new employee for the time remaining from the original. It must be signed by both your agency and the new hire, just like a normal 12 month Provisional. **Please note:** *The signed form must be submitted to CFL as soon as possible and not more than 30 days after the effective date.*
4. Once approved, CFL will return a signed copy. Make a copy to provide to the employee for their records. Make sure they understand they do not need to resubmit it to CFL.

TIP: If the employee has used all 12 months previously, they are not eligible for another Provisional MHRT I. They can, however, complete the required trainings and apply for a full MHRT I.

B. New Applicant who has a Full MHRT I:

A Full MHRT I remains valid as long as all required trainings are kept current. Once an individual has been issued a Full MHRT I, *it is the responsibility of the individual and their employer* to keep their trainings current in their files. The applicant should be able to produce copies of their training certificates. As long as they are current, Full MHRT I is valid.

Occasionally, an individual will leave the MHRT I field to pursue other work. It is understandable that in those cases, they might not keep their trainings current. In instances where the individual has not worked in the MHRT I field for at least one full year, a hiring agency may be permitted to issue a short-term Provisional MHRT I for up to six months to enable the new hire to update their trainings. Here are the steps involved to do this:

1. The new hire provides a copy of their MHRT I certificate. If they do not have a copy, they may contact CFL in writing to obtain a copy. The copy can only be released directly to the individual.
2. Contact the most recent employer and obtain written documentation that the new hire did not use their MHRT I certification at that employer for at least the past year.
3. Determine which training(s) need to be updated and the date(s) that those training(s) can be completed. In other words, document a plan to update their training(s).
4. Issue a Provisional MHRT I to cover this time period. You may add a couple weeks to it as some training certificates can take a few weeks to be issued.
5. Submit to CFL a simple cover letter indicating the new hire has not been employed in the MHRT I field for at least a year (list date) and list which training(s) need to be updated on which date(s).

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Include a copy of the documentation from Step 2 and the new Provisional MHRT I form. It should be based on the time you need to update the new hire's trainings and not more than six months in total length. Ex: If a required training can be completed in three months, the new provisional should be three months in length. It must be signed by both the agency and the new hire. **Please note:** *The signed form must be submitted to CFL as soon as possible and not more than 30 days after the effective date.*

6. Once approved, CFL will return a signed copy. Make a copy to provide to the employee for their records. Make sure they understand they do not need to resubmit it to CFL.
7. Once trainings are completed, place copies in your agency's files. Make sure the new hire also has copies. You do not need to send copies to CFL.

FULL MHRT I CERTIFICATION

To obtain the Full MHRT I certificate, an individual must complete the following:

1. Mental Health Support Specialist (MHSS)
2. A DHHS-Approved Behavioral Intervention Training (Ex: MANDT, PRAB, Safe Crisis Management)
3. First Aid
4. CPR (usually combined with First Aid)
5. 40 hour Certified Residential Medication Aide (CRMA)

All trainings must be face-to-face with the exception of the American Heart Association's blended First Aid/CPR course where some of the training is conducted online, but includes a face-to-face testing component.

For a list of substitutions for the MHSS and links to resources for each training, please see the following page on the CFL website: <http://cfl-muskie.org/index.php/full-certification>

When an individual completes the above, they apply to CFL to obtain their Full MHRT I. An agency may also apply on behalf of the individual. When an agency applies, they are expected to make a copy for their records and give the original to the individual.

To apply, submit to CFL (address on page 1) a simple letter of application with the applicant's current return address, phone number, and email address (optional) at which the applicant can be reached during normal business hours and include legible copies of original training certificates for the requirements listed above. All trainings must be current at the time of application. The application letter and copies of the training certificates may be submitted by mail, email, or fax.

Note: The effective date of the Full MHRT I is the date CFL receives all required paperwork.

TIP: Make certification a standing item on team meeting agendas or in individual supervision. The Full MHRT I is current only as long as the required trainings are kept current in the files of the employer and the employee. If a training expires, the MHRT I is not current until that training is updated. There is no grace period for this.

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SUBSTITUTIONS ALLOWED FOR REQUIRED TRAININGS FOR FULL MHRT I:

MHSS: Residential Care Specialist (RCS) certification; Current Full Mental Health Rehabilitation/Community (MHRT/C) Certification; Master's Degree in Social Work; Master's Degree in Counseling, Community Mental Health or other Master's level education that reflects a counseling concentration; OR License as one of the following Master's Level Clinicians: LMSW; LMSW-CC; LCPC-CC; LCPC; APRN, CCS (Certified Clinical Supervisor); Psy.D/Ph.D. Psychologist; or MD/DO Psychiatrist

CRMA: RNs and LPNs may submit a copy of their current license in substitution for the CRMA.

First Aid/CPR: EMTs may submit a copy of their current license in substitution for the First Aid/CPR training.

CURRENT EMPLOYEE HAS FULL MHRT I, BUT SOME TRAININGS HAVE EXPIRED

*It is the responsibility of the individual and the employer to keep all trainings required for the Full MHRT I current in their files. If a training expires, the Full MHRT I is not considered current until that training is updated. Sometimes, extenuating circumstances occur that prevent someone from keeping their trainings current. Examples of extenuating circumstances include: death in the family, medical/maternity leave or active military duty. In these instances, you can apply for a short-term Provisional MHRT I for your employee. These are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and the extenuating circumstances are taken into consideration along with the amount of time requested. *There is no guarantee that your request will be approved.* The process is similar to "New Applicant with Full MHRT I" on Page 2.*

1. Write a cover letter indicating what the extenuating circumstance was (Ex: employee was out on maternity leave, listing dates of leave), which training(s) need to be updated and the date(s) they will be updated on.
2. Include a Provisional MHRT I for the time needed and submit it and the letter to CFL. **Please note:** *The signed form must be submitted to CFL as soon as possible and not more than 30 days after the effective date.*
3. If approved, you will receive the certificate back signed by the CFL rep. If denied you will receive a letter indicating it is denied.

TIP: Make certification a standing item on team meeting agendas or in individual supervision. Trainings must be current for a valid MHRT I.

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APPENDIX A: SAMPLE COMPLETED PROVISIONAL MHRT I FORM

RESIDENTIAL WORKER ORIENTATION FORM FOR MENTAL HEALTH REHABILITATION TECHNICIAN I *PROVISIONAL*

I, Ann A. Body, LSW, HR Manager
Name & Title (please print)

of XYZ Mental Health Agency
Facility Name

222 Nowhere Avenue, Sometown, ME 04000
Full Address of Facility

do hereby certify that John Doe
Name of Employee

has completed MHRT I Provisional Orientation Training as contained in *Provisional Mental Health Support Specialist (MHSS) Handbook*. The above named person is familiar with all the content of the manual, and has demonstrated the ability and understanding to safely and competently perform his/her job assignment with proficiency in accordance with the general requirements contained in the manual. This qualifies said person for this provisional one-year certification, which shall commence on July 1, 2015 and expire on July 1, 2016.

No part of the MHRT I requirements can be waived. In addition, it is the policy of the Department of Health & Human Services-Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHS) not to grant extensions for MHRT I provisional certificates.

Signed:

Signature on this line should match supervisor/HR Rep. at the top (Ex: Ann A. Body) Don't forget the date.

Name and Title of Agency Supervisor

Date

Signature on this line should be the new hire (Ex: John Doe)

Employee

Don't forget the date.

Date

Muskie School MHRT Coordinator

Date

Please forward this form for co-signature to:

MHRT Coordinator
USM Muskie School
12 East Chestnut St.
Augusta, ME 04330
Tel: (207) 626-5280 / Fax: (207) 626-5022