

EAGALA's Certification Program

EAGALA is committed to setting the **standard of professional excellence** in how horses and humans work together to improve the quality of life and mental health of individuals, families and groups worldwide. Based on the feedback from our membership and from our experience of training over the years, this certification structure was developed to accomplish this vision.

This program certifies professionals in the EAGALA Model of Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and Learning. Certification ensures that practitioners have completed training and skill requirements in effective and ethical practice, participate in ongoing learning and education, and uphold a high standard of care.

Certification Process

The EAGALA Certification process involves a learning structure with two certification levels: EAGALA Certification and EAGALA Advanced Certification.

I. To obtain EAGALA Certification:

- 1) Complete Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Training Part 1
- 2) Professional Development Portfolio submitted and accepted
- 3) Complete Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Training Part 2

II. To obtain EAGALA Advanced Certification:

- 1) Complete EAGALA Certification
- 2) Complete Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Trainings Part 1 and Part 2 second times as a returnee
- 3) Attend one EAGALA Annual Conference
- 4) Submit an article that is accepted for publication in the EAGALA magazine
- 5) Complete 150 hours EAGALA client sessions with Mentoring (must be formally signed up with the EAGALA Mentoring Program to start counting the 150 hours – sign up for the program on EAGALA's website under Information)
- 6) Complete Advanced Training

Note: For those who have completed Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Part 1, and will continue to Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Part 2 to attain EAGALA Certification, please read the section under Trainings on the Part 2 course, and the section on the Professional Development Portfolio requirement. If you have any questions, please contact EAGALA.

About the Certification Process

EAGALA's certification program trains professionals and upholds a standard of excellence in ethics, practice, and professionalism in EAGALA Model practice. Consistent with our organization's name, the EAGALA certification process is designed with a focus on growth and learning for the professional. We believe the characteristics of a quality professional include openness to learning, and participating in ongoing personal and professional development.

Trainings

1) **Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Training Part 1** (3 days)

- a) Experiential, hands-on workshop where participants learn the basic foundations of EAGALA Model practice (theory and beginning application)
- b) Anyone may attend (no pre-requisites required)
- c) Returnee process – after attendance at one, professional may continue to attend as many Part 1's as he/she would like at a reduced fee

2) **Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Training Part 2** (3 days)

- a) Part 1 must be completed before Part 2. Part 2 must be completed within 2 years of completing Part 1 (if Part 2 is not completed within 2 years, Part 1 may be re-taken at the returnee rate).
- b) Fundamentals Part 2 is an experiential, hands-on workshop designed to build on the learning in Part 1 and solidify skills, competence, and professionalism in EAGALA Model practice and ethics (application).
- c) We encourage attendees to come with their co-facilitation team if that is in place.
- d) The Part 2 is an intensive process and requires your willingness to be open to learning about yourself and your 'S that may impact your sessions. The Part 2 provides experience to practice and get feedback, so it is an opportunity to put yourself out there and really learn. It is not a time to perform and have to "look good" in front of your peers. Please contact us about this if you have any concerns. If you feel you can not honestly and openly be involved in a process like this, the Part 2 may not be for you.
- e) Returnee process - after attendance, professional may continue to attend as many Part 2's as he/she would like at a reduced fee.

3) **Advanced Training** (3 days)

- a) Pre-requisites to attend:
 1. EAGALA Certified
 2. Attended the Part 1 and the Part 2 trainings at least twice each
 3. Facilitated at least 50 hours of EAGALA Model sessions

- b) The Advanced Training builds on the foundations of Part 1 and 2 trainings and takes participants to a deeper level of facilitation skills. The training focuses on: thinking on one's feet and going with flow of the horses' and clients' stories, taking processing to a deeper level with SPUD'S, consciousness and deliberateness of verbal and non-verbal interventions, and advanced understanding and implementation of metaphor and the symbolic context.

Standards of each team member in EAGALA Model practice

The EAGALA Model requires a co-facilitating team that must include a mental health professional and an equine specialist professional in all sessions. The following delineates minimum standards that must be met to practice in one of these roles on the team. The EAGALA training manual, website, and international regions further specify standards that may be specific to various regions. If a practitioner does not meet the standards of one of these roles, the practitioner may serve as an additional member of the team (i.e. 3-person team).

Mental Health Professional –

- 1) Professional needs to have college-level educational training and degree in a mental health field, such as social work, psychology, marriage and family therapy, or others that include mental health as its scope of practice.
- 2) Professional must stay within his/her scope of practice and follow region, country, or state laws and regulations regarding mental health practice.
- 3) Professional needs to be under a governing board/body or member of an association that can hold him/her accountable (or under professional supervision by a supervisor that is held accountable by a governing board/association), i.e. a board that can revoke registration, certification, accreditation, or licensure for ethical or scope of practice violations relating to mental health practice.

Equine Specialist Professional –

- 1) Professional must have 6,000 hours (equals to approx. 3 years full-time work) experience hands-on work with horses.
- 2) Professional must have completed at least 100 hours of continuing education in the horse profession. Some of this education needs to include topics covering:
 - a) Ground work experience
 - b) Horse psychology knowledge
 - c) Ability to read horse body language/nonverbal communication
- 3) 40 hours of the continuing education listed in #2 must have been completed in the last 2 years.

Professional Development Portfolio

Prior to attending the Fundamentals Part 2 training, the applicant will turn in a Professional Development Portfolio which will be kept on file at the EAGALA office. This will be a typed paper that consists of:

- 1) Name, address, email, website, phone, and date
- 2) “I (name) commit to adhering to EAGALA’s standards and ethical code.” (signature)
Please ensure you do have your signature! We do accept typed signatures for emailing purposes.
- 3) Answer the following questions:
 - 1) Why do you wish to work as an EAGALA Model facilitator?
 - 2) What strengths do you bring to this?
 - 3) What areas of your own professional development do you wish to focus on?
- 4) Explanation/resume with any supporting documentation indicating professional qualifications and how you meet the standard for role in EAGALA team. With this, please do the following:
 - State on the portfolio whether you qualify as the ES, MH, either side, or in another professional role (you don’t fall into either ES or MH category and will serve as a specialist 3rd member of the team). If you wish to play either role of the treatment team (i.e. sometimes play the role of the ES or sometimes the MH), your professional statement needs to indicate how you meet the standards of both roles. If you are a student or do not meet the standard of either ES or MH, still submit a Professional Development Portfolio with an acknowledgement of not practicing until you meet one of the required roles, or how you plan to perform as a 3-person team which includes your role as a specialization.
 - Provide specific information that delineates the experience and background you have to meet the standard. Use the three points of the standard (see above) and indicate by each number how you meet that aspect of the standard, i.e. for ES: 1. I have over 6,000 hours with horses as indicated by _____. 2. I have at least 100 hours of continuing education with the following _____. 3. In the last two years, I have done over 40 hours of continuing education by doing _____.)

Note: Professional Development Portfolios may be emailed to EAGALA. Please do not use report covers for portfolios as they are not needed. **You may also complete your portfolio through our online form** located on the EAGALA website under Information - Certification program: http://eagala.org/Certification_Program/Portfolio.

Certification Renewal

- 1) EAGALA Certifications expire every 2 years
- 2) To renew certifications:
 - a) Complete 20 hours EAGALA approved continuing education (see website under Information - Certification Program or contact EAGALA for more information)
 - b) Complete certification renewal form with fee – new certificate will be sent

Note: Certification renewals may be completed online in the EAGALA Store.

Continuing Education

- 1) Ongoing learning and striving to improve is the key to quality and professionalism.
- 2) 20 hours of EAGALA approved continuing education is needed every two years for certification renewal. EAGALA approved hours may include the following:
 - a) EAGALA sponsored trainings and conferences, such as the Fundamentals of EAGALA Model Practice Part 1 and 2 trainings, Advanced Training, and the EAGALA Annual Conferences
 - b) Time spent with an EAGALA approved Mentor
 - c) Time spent networking/practicing with an EAGALA approved Networking Group
 - d) EAGALA approved Home/Independent Study (See the EAGALA website - Information)
 - e) EAGALA Approved Workshops (See the EAGALA website - Information)
- 3) The continuing education requirement is meant to encourage learning above and beyond the personal experience gained by doing the work professionally. Continuing education involves learning from other professionals or structured/approved educational experiences.
- 4) The certification renewal application requires a list of continuing education completed during the two-year time period (name, type, date, and number of hours).

Mentoring

- 1) After EAGALA Certification, Mentoring is available to assist practitioners in their work with clients by providing individualized feedback and skill-building in EAGALA Model ethics and practice.
- 2) Mentoring places a structure that supports a high standard of professional and ethical practice through peer-review, consultation, and “supervision,” and adds a layer of quality of care for the clients.

- 3) Mentoring involves written session journals (format provided by EAGALA), assignments, and email/phone communications.
- 4) Mentoring is provided by an approved list of EAGALA Mentors who have a minimum of EAGALA Advanced Certification and have completed an application process and ongoing training expectations.
- 5) The mentoring process is not designed to be legal clinical supervision. If an organization or licensure requires supervision, that is a separate process which is the responsibility of the professional.
- 6) Mentoring with EAGALA approved mentors can be applied as EAGALA continuing education for certification renewal.
- 7) Mentoring is focused on practical EAGALA work with clients. It does not include business consultation. EAGALA has a business consultation program if there is a desire for resources in that area.
- 8) For more information and to request a mentor, go to EAGALA's website – Information.

Certification/Membership Expiration

- 1) Once certified, the professional is also considered a member of EAGALA. Certification renewals include two years of membership dues. Joining as an EAGALA Lifetime member provides lower certification renewal fees.
- 2) If certification expires, membership also expires unless the professional pays separate membership dues or is a Lifetime Member
- 3) If certification expires, the professional may not market or represent as being EAGALA Certified
- 4) If Certification expires past one year, the certification status becomes “inactive”
- 5) To re-activate certification, the professional must re-take the Fundamentals Part 1 or Part 2 workshops (may attend at the returnee rates) and complete the certification renewal form with fee
- 6) Certification date will start with re-activation (not initial certification)