



YPA Professional Credential Renewal and Continuing Education FAQ

The New York State Youth Peer Advocate (YPA) Provisional and Professional Credentials are administered by YOUTH POWER! of Families Together in New York State. Individuals who provide Youth Peer Support and Training (YPST), or would like to be a YPST service provider are eligible to apply. Applicants who meet all of the requirements will receive a Credential. **The YPA Professional Credential must be renewed every two years.** For more information on the YPA Credential or to obtain an application form, please [click here](#). If you have any additional questions, please call our office at 518-432-0333, ext. 18.

When does my YPA Professional Credential expire?

All credentials will expire with no exceptions on a YPA's 31st birthday and cannot be renewed. The YPA Professional Credential expires two years from the date it was awarded. When you renew your YPA Professional Credential, it will be valid for another two-year period. It is the responsibility of each YPA to submit the required YPA Credential Renewal paperwork no more than 90 days and no less than 45 days prior to the expiration date of their YPA Professional Credential. This will include documentation of continuing education and the YPA Professional Credential Renewal Form.

When does my YPA Provisional Credential expire?

All credentials will expire with no exceptions on a YPA's 31st birthday. The YPA Provisional Credential will expire 18 months from the date it was awarded. During the 18 month timeframe you must fulfill the requirements and apply for your YPA Professional Credential. **A YPA Provisional Credential is not renewable.** To see if you are eligible for an extension we recommend that you contact the Workforce Development Department. If you do fulfill all of the requirements for a YPA Professional Credential during the 18-month period, you can apply for a Professional Credential. A Professional Credential must be renewed every 2 years. For further questions on your Provisional Credential, please refer to the Provisional Credential FAQ.

What if my Professional Credential Expires?

Once your Professional Credential has expired, you may not identify yourself as a Credentialed Youth Peer Advocate or use YPA-C after your name. Additionally, you will not be eligible to seek reimbursement by any payor that requires you to be credentialed to provide YPST services. If less than six months has elapsed since the expiration date of your credential, you can renew your Professional Credential by submitting the renewal application, along with the late fee of \$10.00. If your Professional Credential has been expired for more than 6 months you may apply to reinstate your credential. Please contact us about the reinstatement process. If a late fee will create an undue hardship for you, or if you have additional questions or concerns about the late fee.

Is there an 'inactive status' option available for YPAs who need to take an extended leave?

YPAs with a current Professional Credential can apply to freeze their credential for up to 12 months. During this time the advocate's credential is inactive, you will not be able to work as a Credentialed Youth Peer advocate. After the freeze period has ended, an advocate can apply to have their credential re-activated. At this time, a new credential with a new expiration date will be issued. If you need to freeze your credential for more than 12 months please contact us.

What is required to renew my YPA Professional Credential?

In order to apply for renewal, you will complete a renewal application, which includes the following:

- Contact information update
- Documentation of 20 hours of continuing education
- An updated signed Code of Ethics statement

Is continuing education required for renewal?

Yes. To be eligible for renewal, YPAs must submit evidence of completion of a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education over the two-year period. It is important for YPAs to enhance their skills, deepen their understanding of different services and systems, and keep up with new developments in the field.

What qualifies as continuing education for YPAs?

Training qualifies if it is relevant to the role of a Youth Peer Advocate and can include online and in-person training. YOUTH POWER! of FTNYS staff often sponsor training, these events would qualify as continuing education. Additionally, relevant independent studies, relevant college courses, and in-service workshops you develop may be considered towards your continuing education with prior approval. If you have any questions about what is acceptable, please contact us.

Are there any specific required YPA Continuing Education courses?

Yes. Beginning July 1, 2021, applicants for renewal will be required to submit two (2) hours of continuing education in Cultural Humility/Bias Reduction/Anti-Racism in order to renew their credential. The Cultural Humility/Bias Reduction/Anti-Racism trainings will be included as part of the current 20-hour requirement for all renewals after July 1, 2021. Below is a list of trainings that we have put together for you to consider to meet the new requirement. You can also find this list on the FTNYS website. We have compiled this list as a starting point. These are just suggestions. Any training that addresses Bias, Cultural Humility, Disparity, Anti-Racism, LGBTQ and/or Micro-Aggressions can be accepted. If you are getting ready to renew your YPA Credential, keep this new requirement in mind as you collect your continuing education activities.

If I conduct a training myself, does that count?

Yes, if it is related to the work of YPAs. You will receive credit for the number of hours of the training you deliver and you can only receive credit once, not every time you deliver the training. If the specific training is going to be longer than 6 hours, please check with us for approval. Again, please attach the agenda and handouts. Use the same form that you would use if you attended training, just note that this was a workshop you provided. If you have a great idea for a webinar, consider developing something to share with your colleagues, we can help you promote the webinar through the FTNYS listserv.

Can I do an independent study, get credit for a college course, another Professional Credential or certificate program?

Yes, you may complete an independent study, get credit for a college course, another Professional Credential or certificate program if it relates to your role as a YPA. Please seek prior approval from your supervisor and check with our office about your eligibility. You would use the same form as if you attended a training (you can modify your answers appropriately). Please also document the actual meetings you attended and/or books or websites you reviewed during your studies or course work. If you developed any written materials, please attach these. If approved, your studies or course work can count for a maximum of 6 continuing education hours. For relevant college courses, course credit hours equate to continuing education hours i.e. if a college course is worth 2 credit hours it would equal 2 continuing education hours.

How do I submit evidence that I have fulfilled the continuing education requirement?

Every time you attend training or complete some other form of continuing education, fill out a YPA Continuing Education Form and collect your course, workshop, or webinar agenda and a certificate of completion, if one was issued. Include this documentation with your YPA Credential Renewal Application. We strongly recommend that you complete the continuing education forms at the time you complete the actual continuing education activities. This way, you will avoid struggling to track down information when the time comes for you to renew your YPA Professional Credential.

Can I renew my YPA Professional Credential if I am not working or do not have a formal supervisor to sign my Continuing Education forms?

Yes. The same renewal rules apply, but instead of a supervisor's signature, you will need to provide documented proof for your continuing education hours. Valid proof includes, but is not limited to, signed attendance sheets, a certificate of completion/attendance, with your name on it, a workshop agenda with the presenter's signature, or signed note from the presenter confirming your attendance. If you have any questions about proof of attendance, please contact our office.

How do I know how many credit hours to record?

You should record the number of hours you spend in active training. For example, if you attend a 2 hour workshop, you would record 2 hours. If you attend a 4 hour training with an hour lunch break, you would receive credit for 3 hours. If the course awards formal approved Continuing Education Units or CEUs (such as are required for social workers), use that number as a guide.

Does the trainer need to sign this form?

No, but your supervisor does. You should ask the presenter to provide a signed attendance sheets, a certificate of completion/attendance, with your name on it, a workshop agenda with the presenter's signature, or signed note from the presenter confirming your attendance if you do not have a supervisor.

Do I use the same form for conferences?

You may use the same form for conferences. Please list the plenary sessions and workshops you attended under the training description. You can attach the conference brochure or cut and paste the workshop descriptions and attach those. Determine the continued education hours based on the length of the workshops. For the FTNYS Annual Conference and University of YOUTH POWER! we have a specific form that makes it easy for you to record the sessions you attended.

**Let's Work Together to Make the YPA Profession Stronger!**

If you have a great idea for a webinar, consider developing something to share with your colleagues. We can help you promote the webinar through the FTNYS listserv. This can count as continuing education for you and for others.

All Youth Peer Advocate Professional Credential and Continuing Education Forms can be found on the FTNYS website www.FTNYS.org under the Workforce Development tab.

Cultural Humility/Bias Trainings

LGBTQ

[Working with LGBTQ Youth in a Mental Health Setting](#)

Racism, Micro-Aggression and Anti-Oppressive Practice

[How Anti-Oppressive Practice Can Impact Our Work](#)

[Strategic Approaches For Behavioral Health Organizations to Address Racial and Social Inequity](#)

[Becoming a Socially Just Organization: Why Should we care and what can we do?](#)

[How Racism Impacts Those We Serve and How We Serve: Are We Meeting Participants Where They Are?](#)

[Race, Poverty & Trauma: Microaggressions and the Therapeutic Alliance: Exploring Ethnically and Racially Diverse Clinician-Participant Relationships](#)

[Race and Trauma Race-based Traumatic Stress and Psychological Injury in Psychotherapy](#)

[Structural Racism and Mental Health](#)

[Resources for Coping With and Addressing Racial Trauma and Oppression](#)

[Legacies of Pain and Resilience: Clinical Implications for Understanding Historical Trauma and Race](#)

Cultural Humility

[Identity Bias and Cultural Humility: Connecting to Ourselves and Others](#)