



PART II: Unique Features of Applied Behavior Analysis

SECTION 1: **TRAINING AND CREDENTIALING OF BEHAVIOR ANALYSTS**

ABA is a specialized behavioral health treatment approach and most graduate or postgraduate training programs in psychology, counseling, social work, or other areas of clinical practice do not provide in-depth training in this discipline. Thus, an understanding of the credentialing process of Behavior Analysts by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®) can assist health plans and their subscribers in identifying those providers who meet the basic competencies to practice ABA.

The formal training of professionals certified by the BACB is similar to that of other medical and behavioral health professionals. That is, they are initially trained within academia and then begin working in a supervised clinical setting with clients. As they gradually demonstrate the competencies necessary to manage complex clinical problems across a variety of clients and medical environments, they become independent practitioners. In summary, Behavior Analysts undergo a rigorous course of training and education, including an “internship” period in which they work under the direct supervision of an experienced Behavior Analyst.

It should be noted that other licensed professionals may have ABA included within their particular scope of training and competence. In addition, a small subset of clinicians may be licensed by another profession and also hold a credential from the BACB, thereby providing additional evidence of the nature and depth of their training in ABA.

Although healthcare funding and management of behavioral health treatments supervised by Behavior Analysts is relatively recent, Behavior Analysts—like other medical and behavioral health providers—rely upon strategies and procedures documented in peer-reviewed literature, established treatment protocols, and clinical decision-making frameworks. They continually evaluate the current state of the client and customize treatment options based on the results of direct observation and data from a range of other assessments. Behavior Analysts also solicit and integrate information from the client and family members and coordinate care with other professionals.

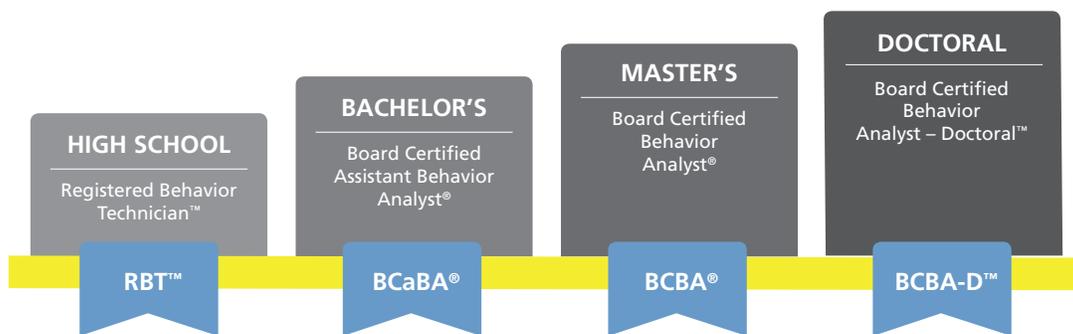
The Behavior Analyst Certification Board

The BACB is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation established to meet professional credentialing needs identified by Behavior Analysts, governments, and consumers of behavior analysis services. The mission of the BACB is to protect consumers of behavior analysis services worldwide by systematically establishing, promoting, and disseminating professional standards. The BACB has established uniform content, standards, and criteria for the credentialing process that are designed to meet:

- The legal standards established through state, national, and case law;
- The accepted standards for certification programs; and
- The “best practice” and ethical standards of the behavior analysis profession.

The BCBA and BCaBA certification programs are currently accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accreditation arm of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence. NCCA reviews and oversees all aspects related to ensuring the development and application of appropriate credentialing processes.

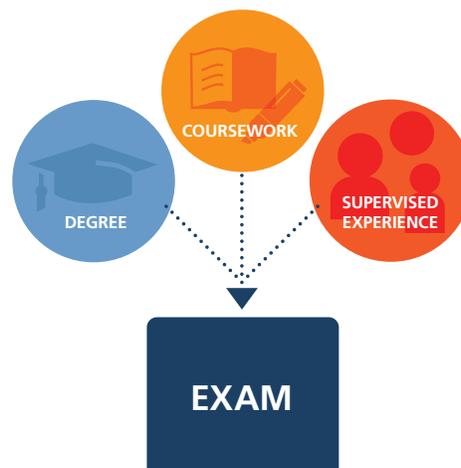
The BACB credentials and recognizes practitioners at four levels:



Practitioners credentialed at the BCBA-D and BCBA levels are defined as Behavior Analysts. The BACB requires that BCaBAs, or Assistant Behavior Analysts, work under the supervision of a BCBA-D or BCBA. RBTs must work under the supervision of a BCBA-D, BCBA, or BCaBA. Note: requirements for the RBT credential are described in Section 5 (Tiered Service-Delivery Models and Behavior Technicians).

Eligibility Requirements for Behavior Analysts & Assistant Behavior Analysts

Applicants who meet the degree, coursework, and supervised experience eligibility requirements described in the next section are permitted to sit for either the BCBA or BCaBA examination (see figure below). Each examination is professionally developed to meet accepted examination standards and is based on the results of a formal job analysis and survey. In addition, all BACB examinations are offered under secure testing conditions and are professionally administered and scored.



Continuing Education and Maintaining Certification

BACB certificants are required to attest to their compliance with the organization's ethical and disciplinary rules (see below) on a biennial basis and obtain 20 (BCaBA) or 32 (BCBA, BCBA-D) hours* of continuing education every two years, 4 hours of which must relate to professional ethics. Organizations that employ Behavior Analysts and Assistant Behavior Analysts should support and provide this training as needed.



*continuing ed. credits every 2 years

Disciplinary Procedures

All certificants must regularly report any matter that might impact their ethical compliance. The BACB's ethical requirements may be found at www.BACB.com.

The BACB uses an online complaint system by which the organization is alerted to potential disciplinary violations. Each complaint is evaluated by the BACB legal department and then, based on its merit, is forwarded to a committee for review and processing. The committee members are senior BCBA's or BCBA-Ds selected for their knowledge and independence, and when advisable includes a member from the certificant's region. Disciplinary actions for certificants include, but are not limited to, advisory consultation, mandated continuing education, suspension of certification, or revocation of certification. Resulting disciplinary actions are publicly reported online.

Licensure of Behavior Analysts

BACB certification credentials or standards are currently the basis for licensure in the U.S. states where Behavior Analysts are licensed. Basing licensure on BACB credentials is cost effective and ensures that critical competencies regarding practice and research are periodically reviewed and updated by practitioners and researchers. Whether it is used as the basis for licensure or as a "free-standing" credential, BACB certification credentials are recognized in those states where insurance reform laws have been enacted and in other states as well.

