



# BCBA FIELDWORK REQUIREMENTS

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# BCBA FIELDWORK REQUIREMENTS

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One of the primary eligibility requirements for certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) is the completion of defined practical supervised fieldwork in applied behavior analysis. The BCBA Fieldwork Requirements represent the criteria for supervised fieldwork (hereafter referred to as “fieldwork”).

*Regardless of when the hours were earned, applicants who apply for BCBA certification on or after January 1, 2022 must meet these requirements.* Because BACB requirements may change over time, supervisors and trainees are responsible for being knowledgeable about current information from the [BACB website](#), [BACB newsletters](#), and the [online table of recent and upcoming changes](#) to ensure that accrued experience hours will qualify at the time of application.

## Supervisor Requirements.

**Supervisor Qualifications.** Supervisors must be one of the following:

- A BCBA/BCBA-D™ in good standing who has been certified for at least one year and meets an [ongoing supervision CEU requirement](#); or
- A BCBA/BCBA-D™ in good standing who has been certified for less than one year and is receiving consultation on a monthly basis from a qualified consulting supervisor; or
- A licensed or registered psychologist certified by the American Board of Professional Psychology in [Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology](#) who was tested in Applied Behavior Analysis; or
- An ABAI Verified Instructor.

**Supervisor Training.** Supervisors must complete an [8-hour supervision training](#) before providing any supervision to those accruing fieldwork hours. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring they have completed the training prior to providing supervision. Trainees must confirm the date that the supervisor completed the training prior to signing a supervision contract.

**Supervisor/Trainee Relationship.** The supervisor may not be related to, subordinate to, or employed by the trainee during the fieldwork period. Employment does not include compensation paid to the supervisor by the trainee for supervision services.

## Supervision Requirements.

**Nature of Supervision.** The purpose of supervision is to improve and maintain the behavior-analytic, professional, and ethical repertoires of the trainee and facilitate the delivery of high-quality services to the trainee’s clients. Behavior-analytic supervision includes, but is not limited to:

- Monitoring the skills of the trainee throughout the supervised fieldwork
- Developing and communicating performance expectations to the trainee
- Conducting behavioral skills training for the trainee
- Observing the trainee’s performance with clients and delivering feedback
- Modeling technical, professional, and ethical behavior
- Guiding the development of behavioral case conceptualization, problem-solving, and decision-making repertoires
- Reviewing the trainee’s written materials (e.g., behavior programs, data sheets, reports) and delivering related feedback about the products
- Overseeing and evaluating the effects of the trainee’s behavior-analytic service delivery
- Evaluating the effects of supervision throughout the supervised fieldwork

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**Structure of Supervision.** Supervision should ideally consist of individual (i.e., one-on-one) contacts between the supervisor and trainee, however, group supervision is permitted in certain circumstances. Groups are interactive meetings in which 2-10 trainees who share similar experiences participate in the supervision activities described above (Nature of Supervision). The number of trainees in a group meeting may not exceed 10 at any time, regardless of the number of BCBA's in the meeting. If non-trainees are present, their participation should be limited and their presence must not inhibit discussion or interfere with participation by trainees.

**Group Supervision Restrictions.** The amount of group supervision may not exceed the amount of individual supervision in a given supervisory period. In other words, supervision may be conducted in groups for no more than half of the total supervised hours in each supervisory period.

**Observation with Client Requirements.** The trainee must be observed working with a client in the natural environment during each supervisory period by at least one supervisor (i.e., an observation by at least one supervisor when there are multiple supervisors at one organization or one observation per individual supervisor). In-person, on-site observation is preferred. However, the observation may be conducted using asynchronous (e.g., recorded video) or synchronous (e.g., live video conference) formats.

**Responsibilities of the Supervisor.** When behavior analysts are functioning as supervisors, they must take full responsibility for all facets of this experience. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that the trainee abides by all ethical and legal requirements. Responsibilities of the supervisor include, but are not limited to:

- Being fluent in, current in, and compliant with the all BACB requirements relating to fieldwork
- Confirming that the trainee has met all requirements prior to the outset of supervised fieldwork
- Consistently demonstrating technical, professional, and ethical behavior for the trainee
- Ensuring that fieldwork activities are in the best interest of the client rather than strictly for the purpose of meeting the fieldwork requirements
- Providing supervision only within their areas of defined competence
- Taking on only a volume of supervisory activity that is commensurate with their ability to be effective
- Delegating to their trainees only those responsibilities that trainees can reasonably be expected to perform competently, ethically, and safely, or providing the conditions for the trainee to acquire those skills in an ethical and safe manner
- Ensuring that supervision, fieldwork activities, and trainings are behavior-analytic in content, effectively and ethically designed, and meet the requirements for licensure, certification, or other defined goals

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- Providing a clear written description of the purpose, requirements, evaluation criteria, conditions, and terms of supervision prior to the onset of the supervision (i.e., behavior analysts are responsible for the development and execution of the supervision contract, see Supervision Contract below)
- Designing and implementing feedback and reinforcement systems in a way that improves trainee performance
- Providing documented, timely feedback regarding the trainee's performance on an ongoing basis
- Designing systems for obtaining ongoing evaluation of their own supervision activities

**Supervision Contract.** The trainee and supervisor must develop and sign a written contract at the outset of the supervisory relationship. The purpose of the contract is to protect all involved parties and align fieldwork activities with the purpose of supervision (see the [Sample Supervision Contract for BCBA/BCaBA Trainees](#)). The contract should include:

- The responsibilities of the supervisor and trainee, including the completion of the 8-hour supervision training by the supervisor and the adherence of both parties to the fieldwork requirements;
- A description of the appropriate activities and training objectives individualized to the trainee;
- The objective and measurable circumstances under which the supervisor will not sign the trainee's Monthly and Final Fieldwork Verification Form;
- The consequences if the parties do not adhere to their responsibilities (including proper termination of the relationship);
- A statement requiring the trainee to obtain written permission from the trainee's on-site employer or manager when applicable;
- An attestation that both parties will adhere to the BACB's ethics requirements; and
- A statement that the trainee and supervisor are responsible for retaining and providing a copy of the contractual agreement and supervision documentation to the BACB, if requested. These documents should be retained for at least 7 years from the date of the final supervision meeting.

Disputes about the supervisory relationships should first be addressed directly between the supervisor and the trainee. If there is an ethical violation related to the fieldwork, the matter may be reported to the BACB by filing a Notice of Alleged Violation (NAV). Trainees may submit a [Contested Fieldwork Form](#) when the supervisor refuses or is unable to sign the Final Fieldwork Verification Form even though all of the supervision-contract terms have been met. In the event of a contractual dispute, issues may need to be addressed through an appropriate independent legal process.

**Multiple Supervisors/Settings.** It is permissible to use multiple supervisors and settings in order to meet the fieldwork requirements. In such cases, all parties must take care to ensure that the supervision contract includes all relevant parties and clearly defines all roles and responsibilities. In cases where multiple supervisors share responsibility for a trainee's fieldwork, the [Monthly and Final Fieldwork Verification Forms](#) for Multiple Supervisors at One Organization should be used to document the fieldwork.

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## Fieldwork Criteria

The table below summarizes the criteria for each fieldwork type.

	Supervised Fieldwork	Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork
Fieldwork Hours Required to Qualify	2000	1500
Supervisory Period	1 calendar month	
Fieldwork Hours per Supervisory Period	min of 20 hrs. - max of 130 hrs.	
Minimum Number of Supervisor-Trainee Contacts per Supervisory Period (contacts must be at least 15 minutes)	4 contacts	6 contacts
Observation of Trainee with Client per Supervisory Period	1 observation	1 observation
Supervised Hours per Supervisory Period*	5% of hours	10% of hours
Individual Supervision Hours per Supervisory Period	At least 50% of supervised hours must be individual (i.e., group supervision may not exceed 50%).	
Unrestricted Activities	At least 60% of supervised fieldwork must be spent engaged in unrestricted activities.	

\*The supervision percentage is calculated by dividing the supervised hours by the total fieldwork hours.

**Onset of Fieldwork.** Trainees may not start accumulating fieldwork hours until they have:

- Started [qualifying coursework](#) for BCBA certification (they may begin accruing hours after attending the first class meeting); and
- Secured a qualified supervisor (see Supervisor Qualifications above).

**Duration of Fieldwork.** The timeframe of the fieldwork may not exceed 5 continuous years (e.g., May 2020 to April 2025).

**Fieldwork Types.** There are two supervised fieldwork types: Supervised Fieldwork and Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork. Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork provides a pathway for individuals to complete their fieldwork in fewer hours and with more supervision than Supervised Fieldwork.

**Combination of Fieldwork Types.** Trainees may accrue hours in a single category or may combine the two types to meet the fieldwork requirement (i.e., within a supervisory period or across supervisory periods), with fieldwork hours for Concentrated Supervised Fieldwork having approximately 1 1/3 times the temporal value of Supervised Fieldwork. Trainees must meet all other supervision requirements independently for each fieldwork type. For example, the required percentage of supervision, number of observations, and number of contacts must be met independently for each fieldwork type.

**Accrual of Fieldwork.** No fewer than 20 hours but no more than 130 hours of fieldwork may be counted per month. Fieldwork hours include independent hours (supervisor not present) and supervised hours (supervisor present).

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**Partial Months.** Some fieldwork requirements (e.g., number of contacts) may need to be prorated in instances where a trainee does not work a full calendar month (e.g., 4 contacts were required but only 2 weeks of fieldwork were accrued within the month). The BACB does not provide formulas for prorating every instance where there may be a deviation in the calculation of the supervisory period. Instead, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to determine how best to prorate the fieldwork. In the event of an audit, the BACB will require evidence of how the supervisor prorated the fieldwork (and all associated requirements) to ensure the partial fieldwork was consistent with these criteria.

**Clients.** Any person (or groups of people) for whom behavior-analytic services are appropriate may be a client. The trainee may not be related to the client, be the client's primary caregiver, or be related to the client's primary caregiver. Trainees must work with, be observed with, and receive feedback from their supervisor for multiple clients. This requirement is applicable for the duration of the fieldwork (i.e., not per supervisory period).

**Acceptable Activities.** The trainee's primary focus should be on acquiring the skills necessary to demonstrate competence of relevant tasks on the appropriate [BACB Task List](#) and the skills necessary to interact effectively with consumers, supervisors, families, and others.

The supervisor will be responsible for determining whether activities qualify for accruing fieldwork hours consistent with the requirements in this document.

Trainees are strongly encouraged to have multiple experiences (e.g., different settings, populations) with multiple supervisors and from each of the areas of activity below:

- Conducting assessments related to the need for behavioral intervention or for evaluating behavioral interventions (e.g., stimulus preference assessment, functional assessment, staff performance assessment)
- Designing, implementing, and systematically monitoring skill-acquisition and behavior-reduction programs
- Writing behavior/treatment plans, progress summaries, clinical notes, transition summaries, and professional correspondence
- Overseeing the implementation of behavior-analytic programs by others
- Training others, designing behavioral systems, and performance management
- Communicating and collaborating effectively with caregivers and other professionals
- Other activities normally performed by a behavior analyst that are directly related to behavior analysis such as attending planning meetings regarding the behavior-analytic program and researching the literature that is relevant to a current client's programming

**Restricted Activities.** There is a restriction on the overall amount of hours that may be spent delivering therapeutic and instructional procedures during fieldwork. This restriction is designed to ensure that trainees have sufficient time to acquire the other skills necessary for practice as a BCBA (see Unrestricted Activities below). Restricted activities may comprise no more than 40% of the total fieldwork hours (i.e., not per supervisory period). Please note that this restriction does not necessarily refer to all time spent working with clients.

**Unrestricted Activities.** Activities that are unrestricted are those that are most likely to be performed by a BCBA. Unrestricted activities must comprise at least 60% of the total fieldwork hours (i.e., not per supervisory period). Examples of unrestricted activities include, but are not limited to:

- Observation and data collection
- Training staff and caregivers on behavior-analytic programs or content
- Conducting assessments related to the need for behavioral intervention

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- Meeting with clients about behavior-analytic programming and services
- Conducting behavior-analytic assessments (e.g., functional analyses, stimulus preference assessments)
- Data graphing and analysis
- Researching the literature relevant to a current client's programming
- Writing and revising behavior-analytic programs

**Unacceptable Activities.** Only behavior-analytic activities may be counted toward fieldwork requirements. Non-behavior-analytic activities, while valuable, may not be counted. Examples of activities that will not count as fieldwork include, but are not limited to:

- Attending meetings with little or no behavior-analytic content
- Providing interventions that are not based in behavior analysis
- Performing nonbehavioral administrative activities
- Non-behavior-analytic trainings related to service delivery (e.g., crisis management, CPR, billing systems)
- Completing nonbehavioral assessments (e.g., diagnostic assessments, intellectual assessments), paperwork, documentation, billing, or any other activities that are not directly related to behavior analysis
- Attending professional conferences, workshops, or university courses
- Didactic-course assignments

## Documentation of Supervision and Fieldwork

**Unique Documentation System.** Because fieldwork varies across settings and practice areas, the BACB is granting supervisors and trainees the flexibility to develop their own system for documenting ongoing supervision and fieldwork in a way that demonstrates adherence to all of the requirements in this document and the BACB's ethics requirements. Documentation must include the following:

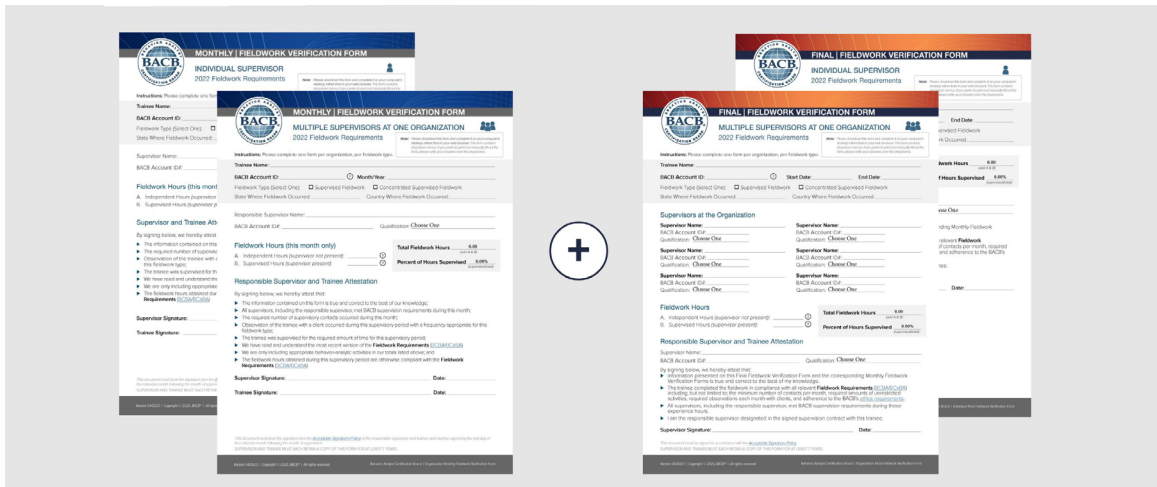
Independent Hours	Supervised Hours
<p>For each session, document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date</li> <li>• Start Time</li> <li>• End Time</li> <li>• Fieldwork Type</li> <li>• Setting Name</li> <li>• Supervisor Name</li> <li>• Activity Category: Restricted or Unrestricted</li> </ul>	<p>For each contact, document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date</li> <li>• Start Time</li> <li>• End Time</li> <li>• Format (e.g., in person, online)</li> <li>• Fieldwork Type</li> <li>• Supervision Type: Individual or Group</li> <li>• Activity Category: Restricted or Unrestricted (when supervision involves observing the trainee in an activity as opposed to a meeting)</li> <li>• Summary of Supervision Activity (e.g., feedback provided, task-list items discussed)</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>For each supervisory period, document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total Hours of Individual and Group Supervision</li> <li>• Total Number of Contacts</li> <li>• Total Number of Observations of the Trainee with Clients</li> </ul>

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**Fieldwork Forms.** Supervisors and trainees are required to use two forms to verify fieldwork:

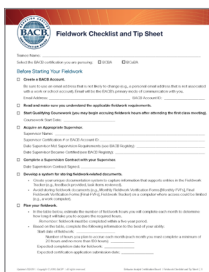
- Monthly Fieldwork Verification Form (Monthly-FVF) — must be submitted upon request
- Final Fieldwork Verification Form (Final-FVF) — must be submitted in the certification application

Two versions of each form are available and should be selected based upon the supervisory structure (i.e., one individual supervisor; multiple supervisors at one organization). Non-BACB forms will not be accepted.

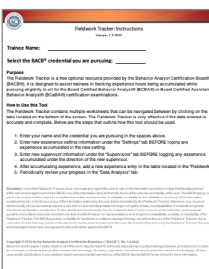


These documents must be signed in accordance with the [Acceptable Signatures Policy](#). The Monthly-FVF must be signed by the last day of the calendar month following the month of supervision and we recommend that the Final-FVF be signed at the end of a specific fieldwork experience. Both parties must retain a copy of completed fieldwork forms for at least 7 years.

## Optional Resources



**Fieldwork Checklist and Tip Sheet.** The Fieldwork Checklist and Tip Sheet provides guidance on important tasks that should be completed prior to beginning fieldwork. The BACB strongly encourages the trainee to complete this checklist and share it with the responsible supervisor at each fieldwork setting.



**Fieldwork Tracker.** The Fieldwork Tracker allows the trainee to enter their fieldwork and supervision hours to assess whether fieldwork requirements are being met.



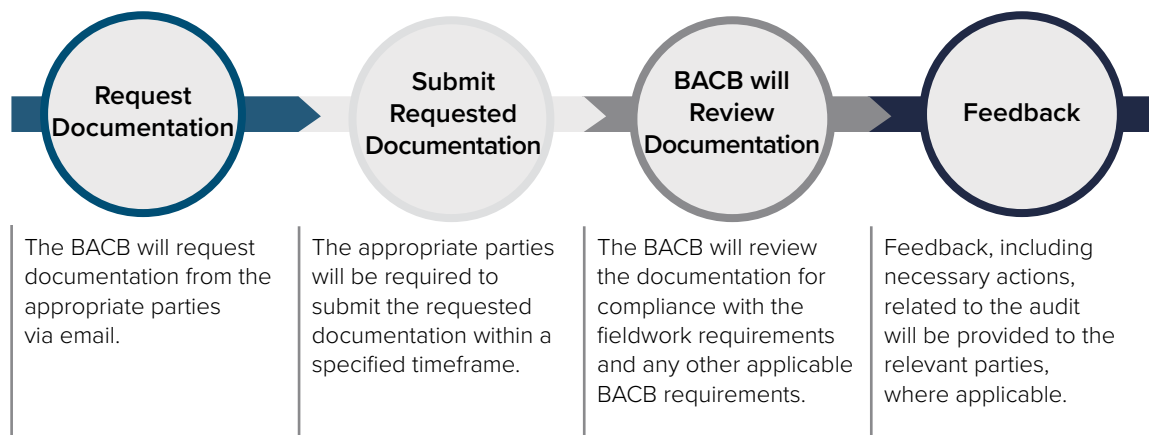
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## Fieldwork Audits

Fieldwork is subject to audit at any time and for any reason at the discretion of the BACB. In the event that a certification application is audited for fieldwork, application processing will be suspended until the completion of the audit. Any fieldwork that is not in compliance with the fieldwork requirements will be disqualified. Information or documentation may be requested from the trainee or the supervisor during this process. Examples of when an audit may be performed include, but are not limited to:

- Ongoing quality assurance audits
- [Administrative appeals](#) related to experience
- [Disciplinary matters](#) related to experience

In the event of an audit:



In the event of an audit, the following documentation may be requested:

- Supervision contract
- The trainee and supervisor's unique records for documenting fieldwork
- Monthly Fieldwork Verification Forms
- The Fieldwork Tracker

If audited, the relevant party may be required to submit the requested documents within seven (7) business days. Thus, it is strongly recommended that the trainee complete the Fieldwork Tracker as fieldwork hours are being obtained, rather than entering the data retroactively.

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## Glossary of Terms

### **Certification Application**

Any initial application for BACB certification (e.g., BCBA, BCaBA).

### **Client**

Any person (or groups of people) for whom behavior-analytic services are appropriate.

### **Fieldwork**

The experiential and supervision activities one engages in as part of the eligibility requirements for obtaining BCBA or BCaBA certification.

### **Fieldwork Verification Forms**

The forms used by the supervisor and trainee to document fieldwork hours each month (the Monthly Fieldwork Verification Form) and at the end of fieldwork (the Final Fieldwork Verification Form). Versions of the forms are provided for individual supervisors as well as organizations with multiple supervisors.

### **Group Supervision**

An interactive supervision meeting that includes no fewer than 2 and no more than 10 trainees. The number of trainees in a group meeting may not exceed 10 at any time, regardless of the number of BCBA's in the meeting.

### **Independent Hours**

Fieldwork hours that are accrued when a supervisor is not present.

### **Observation with a Client**

The trainee must be observed working with a client in the natural environment during each supervisory period by at least one supervisor. In-person, on-site observation is preferred. However, the observation may be conducted using asynchronous (e.g., recorded video) or synchronous (e.g., live video conference) formats.

### **Qualifying Coursework**

Coursework must come from a qualifying institution and cover the required content outlined in the applicable BACB Task List and Course Content Allocation documents. Only graduate (i.e., master's or doctoral) courses where the applicant was formally enrolled and earned a passing grade ("C" or better for graded courses) are acceptable.

### **Responsible Supervisor**

A supervisor who signs a BACB fieldwork verification form on behalf of an organization where multiple supervisors are providing supervision for one trainee.

### **Restricted Activities**

The delivery of therapeutic or instructional procedures to a client. **Note:** *not all time spent working with a client is considered restricted. For example, a number of unrestricted activities may involve the trainee working directly with a client (see "Unrestricted Activities" definition below).*

### **Supervised Hours**

Fieldwork hours that are accrued when a supervisor is present. These may include restricted or unrestricted activities being observed by a supervisor, or individual or group meetings with the supervisor.

### **Supervisor**

An individual who is qualified as a supervisor (see Supervisor Qualifications) for trainees who are accruing fieldwork hours towards BCBA or BCaBA certification.

### **Supervisor-Trainee Contact**

A real-time interaction between the supervisor and trainee that takes place in an individual or group format.

### **Trainee**

Any individual accruing fieldwork toward fulfilling eligibility requirements for BCBA or BCaBA certification.

### **Unrestricted Activities**

Activities that are most likely to be performed by a BCBA or BCaBA, including conducting assessments, staff training, developing behavior plans, among others.



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