



## Level 1 Certification Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

### Why should I become certified?

Be on the cutting edge of lacrosse coaching. Your Level 1 certification verifies that you have achieved coaching knowledge from the ONLY standardized lacrosse coach training program in the US developed and endorsed by the leader in the sport, the national governing body, US Lacrosse.

Earning a certification from US Lacrosse means that you have passed a world-class background check through the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI), that you have completed three solid foundational coaching education offerings—the US Lacrosse Level 1 online course, Level 1 instructional clinic, and Positive Coaching Alliance workshop Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons (DGC 1), and that you are an insured, coach member of US Lacrosse.

### Who can become certified?

US Lacrosse coach category adult members.

We are sorry, individuals under 18 years of age are not eligible for certification. They may however participate in clinics and online courses, earning the certificates of completion, and they are encouraged to do so if they will be assistant coaching or working at lacrosse camps for youth. Please note that there is an age restriction on clinic registrations that needs to be waived via a personal phone call from an adult who can vouch for those under 18 who wish to attend the clinic.

### What does certification cost?

The cost to apply for certification is \$35; for residents of New York state the cost is \$52

### How do I become certified?

Please see the steps for [certification](#) which are found at <http://www.lacrosse.org/cep/certification.phtml>. They are also found below before the FAQ's for each step.

<b>STEP 1: Get the knowledge:</b> Complete your educational components (EC's)
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>∞ PCA workshop Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons (DGC 1) course is completed on-line or at live workshop</li><li>∞ CEP <a href="#">Level 1 on-line course</a> is completed</li><li>∞ CEP <a href="#">Level 1 Instructional Clinic</a> is completed</li></ul> |
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### **STEP 1 FAQ's**

#### **Do I have to complete my educational components in any particular order?**

No! You make do any of these at any time. Just make sure you keep copies of your certificates for your coaching portfolio.

#### **How long are my initial educational components good for?**

Your prior participation in any of the three educational components at any time since their initial launch counts toward your initial certification.

The Level 1 online courses launched in July 2004. Level 1 clinics launched September 2005.

### **Can I mix and match men's and women's online courses and clinic components?**

To become certified, you must take the same online course and clinic (for example, men's online course, men's clinic). We do invite you to become certified in both the men's and women's game if you coach both.

### **Where can I complete my educational components?**

The [Level 1 online courses](http://www.uslacrosse.org/cep/online.phtml) are found at <http://www.uslacrosse.org/cep/online.phtml>

The schedule of [Level 1 clinics](http://www.uslacrosse.org/cep/instructional.phtml) can be found at <http://www.uslacrosse.org/cep/instructional.phtml>

The online version of [Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons](http://www.positivecoach.org/CertOnline.aspx) is available at <http://www.positivecoach.org/CertOnline.aspx> US Lacrosse members receive a 20% discount for the online workshop. Visit the certification home page at <http://www.uslacrosse.org/cep/certification.phtml> for the current discount coupon code.

PCA in-person workshops are mostly sponsored by your local sports organization. Contact your administrator or local chapter to find out if they are partners with PCA. US Lacrosse also offers workshop grant opportunities to lacrosse organizations to assist in bringing these workshops to local areas. Visit <http://www.uslacrosse.org/programs/partners.phtml> for more information. There is also always a Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons workshop at the [US Lacrosse National Convention](#).

### **What if there aren't any clinics in my area?**

You have a few options. US Lacrosse strives to host a clinic in all 16 regions annually. You may look at the clinic schedule and make plans to attend the one in your region. You may also encourage your US Lacrosse [chapter](#) to consider hosting a clinic in your area. Information about [hosting](#) is found at <http://www.uslacrosse.org/cep/host.phtml>. US Lacrosse also annually runs a Level 1 clinic at the National Convention in January each year.

### **Do I need to pass any tests for certification?**

The only test you need to pass is the Level 1 online course test. You will not be issued your certificate of completion if you do not.

### **Can I see the certificates I have earned on my US Lacrosse membership profile?**

Currently, if you have set up an account to view your membership information and preferences, you cannot see your earned certificates. However, this feature will be coming soon. In the meantime, we recommend you set up your account at

#### **STEP 2: Do the paperwork: Submit your documentation**

- ∞ Download the coaching portfolio (CP) from the web
- ∞ Fill it out completely, carefully following all instructions on the form
- ∞ Attach certificates from your educational components where instructed
- ∞ Send the portfolio to US Lacrosse
- ∞ We will contact you via e-mail when your portfolio has been reviewed

#### **STEP 2 FAQ's**

##### **Do I have to pay anything to submit my coaching portfolio?**

No. You will not need to pay anything until you apply to certify online (Step 3).

##### **What do I do if I don't have my Level 1 certificates?**

You may request a new Level 1 online course certificate from [support@uslcourses.com](mailto:support@uslcourses.com) and a new clinic certificate (while supplies last) from [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org). You do not need these certificates to submit your portfolio, however. Select the option on your portfolio to have US Lacrosse check its database for your Level 1 online course or clinic completion record.

Note that if you choose this option on your [coaching portfolio](#) , the final burden of proof lies with the applicant.

**What do I do if I attended a PCA workshop but no longer have my certification card?**

Send your full name, address, date of workshop, location (city, state) and trainer (if known) to [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org). US Lacrosse will then forward your information to PCA to confirm that you indeed attended a workshop.

-if you attended a DG-C workshop within the past year, PCA will mail you a certification card

-if it has been over one year, PCA will verify via e-mail the date in which you completed the workshop. This e-mail will serve as your certificate

-if you are not in PCA's database, you will be notified.

Note: You will not be in PCA's database only if you did not sign in to your workshop.

Again, the final burden of proof lies with the applicant.

**Will you accept other PCA workshops other than the Double Goal Coach 1 workshop?**

Currently, we believe that the DGC 1(Coaching for Winning and Life Lessons) provides the best overview of the double-goal coach model and do not accept other workshops as substitutions in order to maintain consistency. If this presents a hardship or you would like to speak with us further about this, please contact [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org).

**My PCA card says that my PCA certification expires in a year, and it has been more than a year since I did the Double Goal Coach Workshop!**

The statement is a recommendation by PCA, not US Lacrosse. We will accept completion of the Double Goal Coach Workshop anytime in the reasonable past.

**What happens when I send my portfolio in?**

US Lacrosse reviews your components and records in your US Lacrosse database record that we received and reviewed your portfolio. We then send you via e-mail the online link to become certified. Make sure the e-mail address you put on your portfolio is the address you want this e-mail sent to.

**How long does this step take?**

Please allow 2-4 weeks for the portfolio review. Some times of year are busier than others. If you apply to certify during peak season (January and February) be prepared for a longer wait than at off-peak times of year.

**STEP 3: Take the plunge: Apply to certify**

- Go to the link provided to you in the e-mail
- Fill out the online application which also collects information to run our state of the art background check
- The cost for certification is \$35; for residents of New York state the cost is \$52
- Your membership before starting this step must be good for 6 months from the date you apply to certify.

**STEP 4 FAQ's**

**Why is there a fee to apply to certify?**

It costs a significant amount for US Lacrosse to issue a certification of this caliber and offer the "check-it-twice" background check which includes national and county searches. We have worked hard to keep these costs down for you. If certification costs are prohibitive, we encourage you to contact your local chapter. Local chapters receive rebates from US Lacrosse based on the membership in its region, and many chapters utilize those funds to support the game on the local level.

**How do I pay?**

When you go to the link provided in the e-mail, you will be able to pay via credit card through a secure online registration process. Please do not send cash or check payment with your portfolio. If using a credit card online presents a challenge for you, please contact [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org).

**Why does it cost more for residents of New York state?**

Our background check runs national and local database searches, including county searches. New York state requires additional local court fees to conduct these searches.

**Who is your background check provider?**

Our provider is the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI). For more information on their product and its merits, visit <http://www.ncsisafe.com>.

**Why do you run a background check as part of certification?**

In today's society, it is important that coaches are able to show that they meet the standards set by the [National Council of Youth Sport](http://www.ncys.org) (NCYS) persons safe to work with youth. (Their website is [www.ncys.org](http://www.ncys.org) if you desire more information) Your certification verifies that you have been screened based on these criteria. This is a benefit to you as you seek coaching positions and as the coaching market becomes more competitive. It also allows your league administrators to rely on US Lacrosse and not a sub-par background check company that would not be as diligent. In fact, US Lacrosse receives no personal information from NCSI about you or the results of your check other than the green light or red light indicator which is based on already agreed upon criteria. This is not always the case with other background check providers. Your information is completely confidential.

**I have a background check through another provider already. Why do I need to pay to do another one with NCSI?**

It is important to US Lacrosse that all certified coaches have a consistent check through one group based on the same criteria; criteria that is nationally recognized as the standard for youth coaches (and based FBI PROTECT Act and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children).

The scope and thoroughness of a background check varies widely from organization to organization based on criteria and vendor. For certification to be meaningful US Lacrosse believes that the National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) offers the most comprehensive service based on criteria that has been nationally established.

If cost is an issue, we encourage you to contact your local chapter. US Lacrosse chapters receive rebates from US Lacrosse based on membership in that chapter, and use those funds to support grassroots efforts.

**What if my league already uses NCSI as its background check provider and I have a valid check with them?**

We prefer if you know your league uses the same service as USL, that you have your check done through US Lacrosse. If reimbursement is a consideration and the league pays for the screening for you, we recommend that you request the league reimburse you the amount that the check would have cost them by your having gone through USL first, which will offset your out of pocket fee for doing the check with us.

If you have already had the check run through your league:

First, your league administrator needs to contact Kelly Sukol at NCSI and request a share activation between your program and US Lacrosse. NCSI will also verify that both groups are checking based on the same criteria.

Once this is established, you will need to submit the Alternate Group NCSI Background Check form and \$15 processing fee with your certification portfolio. Once the portfolio is reviewed you

will be e-mailed verification of your certification. Please note that processing could take longer than usual if requesting the transfer of an already existing NCSI check. The check also must have been completed in the past 6 months to be considered.

### **What are the criteria for passing the background check?**

The criteria for this criminal background check is based on the FBI PROTECT Act and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Convictions for the following crimes will lead to an applicant receiving a "red light" from NCSI:

R1: Any felony (any crime punishable by confinement greater than one year)

- a. Defined on the basis of exposure for the offense for which the defendant was convicted, pled guilty or pled nolo contendere. If pled down, then the crime to which the defendant ultimately pled.
- b. Defined as all crimes punishable by greater than one year in jail or prior, regardless of how characterized by jurisdiction. If range, alternate sentencing, or indeterminate sentencing, outer range > one year.

R2: Any lesser crime involving force or threat of force against a person

R3: Any lesser crime in which sexual relations is an element, including "victimless" crimes of a sexual nature (including pornography)

R4: Any lesser crime involving controlled substances (not paraphernalia or alcohol)

R5: Any lesser crime involving cruelty to animals

### **Who finds out the results of my background check?**

The only result of the criminal background check that will be disclosed by NCSI to US Lacrosse is whether the background check resulted in a "red light" or "green light". NCSI will not disclose the basis for a "red light" determination and NCSI will maintain the confidentiality of the actual results of the criminal background check. The NCSI procedures for the conduct of criminal background checks include an appeal process through NCSI, and a final "red light" or "green light" determination will not be made until the completion of any such appeal process.

### **What happens if I don't receive a green light?**

If you receive a "red light" determination, US Lacrosse shall refuse coaches certification and the applicant not be entitled to membership in US Lacrosse. US Lacrosse does not accept or consider any further appeal once a "red light" determination has been made.

### **Why must my membership be good for three months when I first apply to certify?**

The three month requirement is to ensure that your membership does not expire while the certification process is happening.

### **How do I make sure I have a coach category membership before I apply to certify?**

The system will stop you if you do not have the correct category in your record. If this is the case, please contact [membership@uslacrosse.org](mailto:membership@uslacrosse.org) or call 410-235-6882 x102 to have your record updated. This can be done immediately upon speaking with a representative. You can [check your membership category](https://secure.uslacrosse.org/m.cfm) by going to <https://secure.uslacrosse.org/m.cfm>.

US Lacrosse changed its membership categories in 2007. When you renew as an adult member, you will be asked to indicate your sub-category. Please make sure that you indicate that you are a "coach" when prompted.

### **Why must I have coach category membership?**

Part of being a certified coach verifies that you have comprehensive insurance coverage, including liability insurance. This is valuable to your program or league. For more information about what your [insurance](#) through US Lacrosse coach category membership includes visit

www.bollingerlax.com or the membership section of our website. Your coach category notation ensures that you have the correct coverage should you need it.

**Who do I contact if I have difficulty with the online application?**

Please contact [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org) if you experience difficulty. Please use "certification" in your subject line to expedite an answer. It is also helpful if you are specific with your difficulty and can attach a screen shot where you are experiencing trouble. Vague e-mails about simply having a problem make it harder for us to diagnose the root of the problem quickly. Also, always provide your US Lacrosse membership ID # which will help us expedite the answers to your questions.

**What web browser do I need to use to complete the online certification application and background check registration?**

US Lacrosse and NCSI recommend the use of the following browsers for the certification registration process - Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Netscape, or Opera.

**I use a Macintosh. Is this going to be a problem?**

There are known problems with the Safari browser and the background check online registration process. NCSI recommends the use of the Mozilla Firefox browser for the self registration process until the problems for Safari can be fixed.

<i>STEP 4: Get it: You are certified</i>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ When your background check has been satisfactorily completed, you will receive a confirmation e-mail and your initial certification card. Congrats!</li></ul> |
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**STEP 4 FAQ's**

**How long does it take to get my card?**

Please allow 4-6 weeks for NCSI to process your background check. Your card will be sent in the mail once US Lacrosse receives a green light.

**When does my certification expire?**

Your certification will expire when your membership expires. At that time you will have the option to renew your certification by renewing your membership and your background check at the same time online.

**What if I renew my membership in a batch with my team/league—our administrator sends it all in together?**

Please fill out a Batch Renewal Application found on the certification webpage or request one from [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org). The instructions for submission can be found on this form.

**What is the cost for the renewal?**

The fee is \$30 annually to renew your certification. This fee covers the cost of the annual background check and can be done in the same transaction as your membership renewal.

**Why did my membership expiration date change when I received my new membership card?**

You will also notice that your new membership card will also show a September 30<sup>th</sup> US Lacrosse membership expiration date.

**Why does the membership renewal date move to September 30?**

This way we will better be able to serve your renewal needs and help you should you encounter any difficulties in the course of your renewal. This also ensures that your membership with USL

will be good through the season and that your certification card is in your hands well before the season begins. It will also carry you through summer tournaments.

#### **How does the shift to the September 30 renewal date affect me?**

If your renewal date is in December, November or October, your renewal date will move to the September of the same calendar year or the following year depending on the month you become certified. If you have a January through August renewal date, your membership expiration will be moved forward to the September of that same year or the following year depending on the month you become certified.

#### **Why do I have to do the background check/certification renewal every year?**

The current background check time standard for NGB's working with NCSI including the USOC is either annual or bi-annually. US Lacrosse has chosen the annual renewal with a view of evaluating these criteria on the five year anniversary of certification. We want your certification to reflect a high standard and currently the annual renewal ensures such standards.

#### **Other FAQ's about renewing your certification**

##### **How do I obtain Level 2 certification?**

If you move on to Level 2, you must hold a current Level 1 certification. *The requirements for Level 2 certification HAVE NOT been released yet.* We anticipate announcing the full requirements in fall 2009. The Level 2 online course and instructional clinic will be requirements so please feel free to pursue those opportunities at any time.

##### **How does re-certification work with Level 2 certification?**

The system will be similar to that which is outlined above for Level 1 renewal.

##### **What happens if I choose not to renew my certification for a year by declining the option when I renew my membership?**

If you decline to renew your certification with your membership but change your mind, you may do so until May 1 of the following year. There is also an additional \$20 late fee. Contact [sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org](mailto:sportdevelopment@uslacrosse.org) if you need this service. If you do not renew your certification for a season, you may need to retake Level 1 components again.

##### **What happens if I don't renew my US Lacrosse membership at all?**

You may renew your membership again at any time—make sure you choose “renew membership” so your credential history carries over. You may need to retake Level 1 components again to regain your Level 1 certification status.

US Lacrosse recommends that once you have earned certification that you care for that status and hold on to it. You've earned it!