

## History of the National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP)

Discussion about a national credentialing program for victim assistance professionals began in the 1980's. By the early 90's, several states had successful credentialing programs. In 2000, NOVA invited representatives from state, federal and national victim assistance organizations to discuss implementing a national credentialing program. At a meeting in 2001, although not all of the representatives reached consensus about co-sponsorship, NOVA's members supported the concept overwhelmingly. In 2002, the NOVA Board of Directors unanimously voted to develop a national credentialing program. The Board introduced the NACP at NOVA's 28th Annual Victim Assistance Conference in Nashville in 2002, and launched it in 2003.

## Who Oversees the Program?

NOVA serves as Secretariat of the NACP, and representatives from participating national and state victim assistance organizations serve on the NACP Review & Advisory Committee. The committee of experienced victim assistance professionals reviews applications and identifies revisions in the credentialing program to best meet the needs of the victim assistance field.

**"I am glad that advocates are finally being recognized!"**

## Must Advocates Be Credentialed?

The NACP is **voluntary** and open to any individual who provides services to those victimized by crime, whether as paid or volunteer staff, and whether or not they have a formal education or degree. The program is **inclusive** rather than exclusive and **voluntary** rather than mandatory. The benefits of credentialing to those in the victim assistance field include but are not limited to:

- Enhanced recognition and credibility in the victim assistance field
- Mobility in the field
- Generated and defined by the field, rather than by outsiders
- Identification with a group whose common ground is victim services

## Levels of Credentialing

The following levels of credentialing became effective October 2005:

**Provisional Advocate Credential**  
**Basic Advocate Credential**  
**Intermediate Advocate Credential**  
**Advanced Advocate Credential**

Provisional Advocate Credentialing is \$50. Basic, Intermediate and Advanced Advocate Credentialing are each \$100. Renewal Credentialing is \$75. Renewal with Upgrade to the next level is \$100.

## Entitlements

- Credentials are renewable every two years and may be upgraded.
- Credentialed advocates may request an indication of a "Specialty Designation" on their credential.
- Credentialed advocates receive a credential suitable for framing and a wallet card.
- Credentialed advocates may use the designation "CA" after their names.
- Credentialed advocates may publicly display the NACP Code of Ethics in their workplace.

## How and When to Apply

Victim assistance professionals may submit applications in May and October each year. The NACP Review Committee meets to review applications in June and November only. Deadlines, annually, are:

May 31 (for June review) and  
October 31 (for November review).

Downloadable application forms are at: <http://www.trynova.org/nacp/forms.html>. Applicants are encouraged to read the application carefully. Incomplete or improperly filled out applications will result in a delay in reviewing and processing.

## National Advocate Credentialing Program Partners

MADD National

National Association of Attorneys General - VAWA Project

National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards

National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators

National Center for Victims of Crime

National Organization for Parents Of Murdered Children

National Organization for Victim Assistance

Ohio Advocate Network

PA Commission on Crime & Delinquency

### For More Information

Visit <http://www.trynova.org/nacp/> or call 703-535-6682.

**“I am proud to hang this credential on my office wall.”**

## Training Program Approval

A state victim assistance academy (SVAA) or a victim assistance program's pre-service training program (that is in compliance with the required minimum 40 hours of basic training) and its ongoing efforts to make continuing education available to its participants or staff through in-service, local, state and/or national training, may have its training program approved by NACP. NACP will review the training program curriculum for consideration of pre-approval status and will review the curriculum every two years to ensure that the curriculum still meets the minimum 40-hour basic training requirement.

Interested training program coordinators should submit their curriculum to NACP for review and approval at any time by mailing to:

NACP Review Committee  
c/o NOVA  
Courthouse Square  
510 King Street, Suite 424  
Alexandria, VA 22314

**“This credential will let victims I work with know of my dedication and commitment to serving them, and will let my professional colleagues know that I have earned this honor.”**

# The National Advocate Credentialing Program



*Credentialing the  
Professionals Who Serve  
Those Victimized by Crime*