# Mental Health First Aid Instructor Application

# Overview: Becoming a Mental Health First Aid Instructor

Becoming a Mental Health First Aid instructor is an exciting opportunity and we are thrilled that you or your designee is considering this opportunity. Being a successful Mental Health First Aid instructor is highly rewarding. However, this role also requires a serious commitment of time, energy and creativity. Before applying to become a certified instructor, we want to make sure that you fully understand what will be necessary for certification as well long term success as a Mental Health First Aid instructor. If you are in the role of reviewing applications for instructors, we hope the guidance below will assist you in selecting those individuals who will have the highest probability of being successful.

**Who should apply to become an instructor?**

A Mental Health First Aid instructor is required to serve as a presenter, a facilitator, and most importantly an ambassador of the Mental Health First Aid USA program. There are several key components that make an instructor successful. First and foremost, **it is required that an instructor candidate:**

* Has general knowledge of mental health and substance use issues (i.e. is a mental health/substance use professional, has worked with individuals experiencing mental health disorders or is in recovery from mental illness or substance use disorders)
* Has experience teaching groups of adults
* Understands best practices in adult learning
* Has experience facilitating groups

While the instructor training reinforces some of the skills and knowledge areas above, it is not designed as a substitute for prior knowledge and experience.

Second, instructors must identify financial and operational support to schedule and run their classes. Therefore, it is highly recommended that instructor candidates demonstrate appropriate external support with tasks related to the program. For example, many successful instructors garner support from their employer organization or a partner community organization in order to accomplish the following tasks that are required of instructors:

* Planning (e.g., creating business plans, forming community partnerships, outreach)
* Setting a course schedule
* Setting and collecting course fees
* Marketing and media outreach
* Course registration
* Event planning (e.g., catering, logistics)
* Seeking grants sources of fiscal support
* Collecting and entering course evaluations and incorporating feedback

**Instructor Training and Certification**

The Mental Health First Aid instructor training is held over five days and is taught by two authorized Mental Health First Aid National Trainers. A maximum of 30 instructor candidates are allowed per training.

**Pricing**

Tuition for each instructor candidate is $1,300.00. This fee is inclusive of the five days of instruction, breakfast and lunch during the training, instruction materials, and continued support from Mental Health First Aid USA staff for as long as the individual remains a certified instructor. Instructor candidates will be responsible for travel, hotel and any miscellaneous expenses during the week of training. Payment must be made at least 30 days prior to the start of the instructor training.

**Training Structure**

National Trainers guide candidates through the five day training with an emphasis on coaching and preparing candidates to be ambassadors of Mental Health First Aid. Courses typically run from 9 am-5pm each day, with dedicated time on day three for independent preparation for presentations delivered on days four and five. On the fourth and fifth day of the training, each instructor candidate will present and teach an assigned portion of the 8-hour course to the group. The National Trainers will conduct an individual evaluation of each candidate, and each candidate will provide a peer review for their colleagues.

**Outcome of Instructor Training**

There are 3 possible outcomes from the instructor training: 1) full certification 2) provisional certification or 3) no certification. Attendance is not a guarantee of certification.

1. **Full Certification**

In order to become a fully certified instructor, each candidate must receive a score of 36 or higher on their presentation evaluation, and must complete and pass a written exam prior to the end of the training.

1. **Provisional Certification**

When a National Trainer discerns potential in an instructor candidate, but also recognizes that an individual will need additional support to deliver the curriculum effectively, a Provisional Instructor status can be issued. National Trainers make this determination by considering several factors including the candidate’s exam score, course attendance and presentation score. Candidates who score between 32 and 35 on their presentation could be considered. Other factors include the candidate’s desire to improve and his or her willingness to adhere to the conditions of a Provisional Instructor. The Provisional Instructor is awarded a certificate along with all fully certified instructors. In addition, the Provisional Instructor will be listed and receive credit for the classes that he or she teaches with a fully certified instructor. However, there are 5 important restrictions that apply to this status. A Provisional Instructor:

1. must co-teach with a fully certified instructor at all times;
2. is not allowed to order any materials independently (ordering materials needs to be done by their co- instructor);
3. cannot register a course in the data system;
4. cannot enter evaluation data (evaluating data entry needs to be done by their co-instructor);
5. and may not enroll in an expedited course for additional Instructor certifications (i.e. if an Instructor has a provisional status as an Adult MHFA Instructor they may not enroll to become a Youth MHFA Instructor as a part of an expedited training).
6. **No Certification**

An instructor candidate will not be certified as an instructor in the event that s/he receives a score of less than 32 on the presentation portion and/or does not pass the instructor exam.

***Please note that all certification determinations are made by an elite group of Mental Health First Aid National Trainers.***

**Cancellation Policy**

Individuals who are accepted into the instructor training will be required to submit their tuition payment no later than 30 days prior to the start date of their training. Should the instructor candidate need to cancel his/her attendance, they must submit a request in writing no more than 30 days prior to the training start date. A service fee of $75 will be deducted from all cancellation requests received by that date. Registrants who do not cancel by this date and do not attend the training will be responsible for the full tuition and registration fee. No refunds will be given for cancellations received less than 30 days prior to the training.

**Instructor Commitments**

Whenan individual becomes a certified Mental Health First Aid instructor, she or he is committing to teach the full 8-hour course with fidelity to the core program model and key messages. Instructors are responsible for almost all components of their trainings, including:

* Recruiting participants and securing a training location
* Collecting course fees
* Ordering manuals for all participants
* Preparing course materials
* Compiling local resources
* Providing participant evaluations to Mental Health First Aid USA

In order to maintain instructor certification, instructors are required to:

* Teach their first course within six months of becoming certified
* Teach at least three courses each year
* Complete re-certification after 2 years
* Pass Quality Evaluation visits and assessments
* Maintain satisfactory participant evaluation scores
* Engage in instructor/course re-fresher activities as instructed

# Pre- Application Assessment: Am I Ready to be an Instructor?

This self-assessment is designed to help you determine your level of readiness to become a Mental Health First Aid instructor. The self-assessment score will not be included in your final application score, should you choose to apply. Please rate yourself on the following items using the scale provided below.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1-**Strongly disagree | **2-**Disagree | **3-**Neither agree or disagree | **4-**Agree | **5-**Strongly agree |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Score** |  | |
| **Before The Training** | | |
|  | I have solid knowledge of the goals of the Mental Health First Aid program | |
|  | I have solid knowledge of mental health, mental illness and substance use | |
|  | I am comfortable presenting in front of groups of 15-30 participants | |
|  | I am familiar with the use of Powerpoint and a remote | |
|  | I am comfortable adhering to a set curriculum of objectives, required talking points and activities | |
|  | My organization has made this program a priority for me and my time | |
| **During the Training** | | |
|  | I have cleared my schedule of any conflicts during the timeframe | |
|  | I am ready to give adequate time to work on my exam and presentation | |
| **After The Training** | | |
|  | I am willing and able to spend an average of 40 additional hours learning the curriculum prior to teaching my first course | |
|  | I intend to solicit feedback from others to improve my instruction (i.e. other instructors, participants) | |
|  | I am confident that I can plan and deliver 3 courses in the coming year | |
|  | I intend to invest in learning activities to support my mastery of the curriculum | |
|  | I will promote and maintain the fidelity of the Mental Health First Aid course | |
| **Interest** | | |
|  | I am passionate about teaching a mental health public education model of intervention | |
|  | Destigmatization of mental health and substance use disorders is important to me | |
| **Interpersonal Skills** | | |
|  | People describe me as someone who can connect with diverse audiences | |
|  | I am able to resist becoming defensive when challenged and am able to understand the emotion underneath the challenge and respond respectfully | |
|  | When facilitating groups, I can effectively draw people out or limit participation | |
|  | I have the flexibility needed to work well with another instructor who has a different style of instruction and interaction | |
| **Regulation** | | |
|  | My life experiences will serve as an asset to teaching Mental Health First Aid | |
|  | I am confident that I am emotionally ready to be an instructor (i.e. if I have experienced a trauma in my own life, enough time and healing has taken place) | |
|  | I am able to maintain my composure when participants disagree with and challenge me or the course content | |
| **Organizational Skills** | | |
|  | I can organize my thinking, speaking and materials to effectively teach the course | |
|  | I can monitor myself and adhere to a timed agenda throughout the course | |
| **Total Score:** | | |
| **Scoring Rubric*:*** | | |
| *Highly ready*  *Very ready*  *Moderately ready*  *May not be ready at this time* | | 109 -120  97- 108  84 - 96  below 84 |

# Application: Mental Health First Aid Instructor Certification Training

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Part I: Applicant Information** | |
| **Name:**  **(*first, last*)** |  |
| **Title:** |  |
| **Applicant Type:** | * ☐I am applying as an independent trainer * ☐I am applying as an agent of my employer * ☐Other, please specify: |
| **Organization Name:**  ***(if applying as an agent of your employer)*** |  |
| **Organization Type:** | * ☐Private * ☐Public * ☐Not-for-profit * ☐For-profit * ☐Other, please specify: |
| **Industry Type:** | * ☐Faith community * ☐Corporate * ☐Human resources/Employee Assistance Program * ☐Law enforcement/public safety * ☐Higher education * ☐Primary/secondary education * ☐Hospitality * ☐Older adults * ☐Social services * ☐Behavioral healthcare * ☐Other healthcare * ☐Government * ☐Other, please specify: |
| **Organizational Service Area:** | * ☐Urban * ☐Suburban * ☐Rural * ☐Frontier |
| **Email:** |  |
| **Primary Phone Number:** |  |
| **Secondary Phone Number:** |  |
| **Mailing Address:** |  |
| **Desired Training Date and Location:**  ***(For a full list of trainings offered, click*** [***here***](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/cs/become-an-instructor/find-upcoming-instructor-training-courses/)***.)*** | **1st Choice**  Date:  Location:  **2nd Choice**  Date:  Location: |
| **Are you applying for a youth or adult instructor training?** | * ☐Youth * ☐Adult |
| **Full or expedited training?** | * ☐5 Day training for **new** instructor * ☐2.5 Day training for **current** instructor |
| **Does your organization have a primary contact for Mental Health First Aid activities?** | * ☐No * ☐Yes   If yes, please provide the name and contact information.  Name:  Email:  Phone number: |
| **Does your organization have an active community/public education program?** | * ☐Yes * ☐No |
| **How did you find out about the instructor training program?** | * ☐Employer email * ☐Employer requirement * ☐Professional relationship * ☐Personal relationship * ☐Internet search * ☐MHFA USA Website * ☐MHFA Instructor * ☐Have attended 8 hour course * ☐Other, please specify: |
| **Part II: Applicant Experience and Qualifications**  ***Please note that each response will be scored. You are encouraged to provide as much detail as word limit permits.*** | |
| 1. Why do you want to become an instructor? (max 200 words) | |
| 1. 2. Please provide a description of your personal and/or professional experiences in the field of mental health that qualify you to teach a Mental Health First Aid course (i.e. clinical experience, personal or family history, social service experience, etc.). Please provide time frames for any relevant experience. (max 300 words) | |
| 1. 3. Please provide a description of your experiences in adult instruction that would qualify you as a strong candidate to be an effective Mental Health First Aid instructor (i.e. group facilitation, teaching, etc.). Please provide time frames for any relevant experience. (max 300 words) | |
| 1. 4. Have you taken a Mental Health First Aid course?  * ☐Yes * ☐No   If yes, when did you take the course (mm/yy): | |
| 1. 5. What other skills or experiences do you have that you believe will support your success as a Mental Health First Aid instructor? (max 200 words) | |
| **Part III: Understanding of Program** | |
| 1. 6. What does the term “mental health” mean to you? (max 200 words)      1. 7. What factors do you believe create and maintain the stigma associated with individuals who have mental health problems? (max 150 words) | |
| 8. What are the key messages of Mental Health First Aid? (max 200 words) | |
| 9. What do you believe are the skills and attitudes needed to be an effective Mental Health First Aid instructor? (max 150 words) | |
| 10. What would you do if during one of the Mental health First Aid training sessions you are conducting, a participant approaches you privately about a personal mental health problem s/he is experiencing? (max 250 words) | |
| 11. How does Mental Health First Aid support/complement the work you or your organization is already doing? (max 200 words) | |
| **Part IV: Strategic Plan for Implementation** | |
| 12. Please provide some examples of how you have effectively networked with organizations, local services, or other partners within your community to support an initiative (i.e. public education initiative, community event, volunteering, etc.). (max 200 words) | |
| 13. Mental Health First Aid is intended to have a broad appeal to the public. Please describe your plan to implement this program in the next year. Be sure to include information about how to plan to secure funding, how you plan to market your courses, who you will partner with, and what audiences you plan to target. (max 400 words)    14. When do you plan to teach your first course and who will be your target audience? (max 150 words) | |
| 15. What are some potential barriers you may face when trying to implement your above strategies? (max 200 words) | |

# Instructor Application Reference Document

To be considered for the Mental Health First Aid Instructor training, each instructor applicant is required to submit a reference document. No application will be reviewed until both the application and reference document have been received. Please note that references are subject to phone verification. By submitting this form, you are giving permission to Mental Health First Aid USA to contact your reference.

**Selection of Reference**

Please select an individual to complete this form who can attest to your suitability of becoming a Mental Health First Aid Instructor. It is important that this individual knows you and your work well enough to be able to thoughtfully and completely respond to the all questions below.

**Directions**

Please share this document with your chosen reference. When completed, please have your reference return this form to you so that you can submit it with your application.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **First name:** | | | | | |
| **Last name:** | | | | | |
| **Organization Name:** | | | | | |
| **Address:       City/State/Zip:**  **Email:       Phone:** | | | | | |
| How long have you known this applicant? | | | | | |
| What is your relationship to this applicant? (I.e. in what capacity have you known this applicant?) | | | | | |
| Please describe the role and responsibilities that you believe this applicant will be taking if he/she becomes a Mental Health First Aid Instructor? | | | | | |
| Why do you think this individual would be successful in training others in Mental Health First Aid? | | | | | |
| How would you describe the candidates’ attitude towards people with mental illness and substance use disorders? | | | | | |
| **Please rate the applicant in each of the areas below:** | | | | | |
|  | Poor | Below Average | Average | Very Good | Excellent |
| Knowledge of mental health | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Ability to effectively facilitate a full day training with an audience of up to 30 people | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Ability to engage with audiences that are very diverse in terms of their knowledge base and beliefs about mental health and substance use issues | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

# Instructor Candidate Commitment Form

*A signed, scanned copy of this form must be submitted as a part of the application packet.*

Becoming a successful Mental Health First Aid instructor requires a serious commitment of time, energy and creativity. Similarly, it requires awareness and support of the program, fidelity to the course, understanding of the certification requirements, and commitment to demonstrating best practices in teaching and facilitation. **By signing this Commitment Form, you agree to adhere to the following conditions at all times during the instructor training and subsequent to certification. Please note that if you do not adhere to any of the elements contained in #5 and #6 below, you risk having your instructor status revoked.**

**I hereby agree to:**

1. Fully engage in the Instructor Training by committing adequate time, energy, and enthusiasm throughout the program.
2. Incorporate best practices in presenting, facilitating, and teaching groups into my courses. This includes:
   1. Operationalizing techniques to engage course participants
   2. Using an appropriate tone, volume, pace, and rhythm when teaching a course
   3. Appropriately managing participant interactions
3. Continuously convey and appropriately demonstrate the scope and role of a Mental Health First Aid instructor during my courses. This includes:
   1. Using personal disclosure of experiences in an appropriate manner
   2. Serving as an ambassador of Mental Health First Aid
   3. Respecting the privacy of course participants, colleagues and other, including the responsibility to protect personal information on paperwork and in gaining permission to share personal stories or experiences of others.
4. Demonstrate fidelity to the Mental Health First Aid curriculum during my courses. This includes but is not limited to:
   1. Incorporating all required curriculum components in my courses (i.e. all required activities, discussions, films, and slides)
   2. Demonstrating and reinforcing the application of ALGEE
   3. Communicating and reiterating that mental health disorders are real and everyone deserves support and intervention
   4. Communicating and reiterating that recovery is possible
   5. Refraining from using stigmatizing language and correcting course participants should they use stigmatizing language
   6. Using person-first language and correcting course participants should they not use person-first language (For a complete list of Fidelity considerations, please see the Quality Evaluator Rubric).
5. Follow all course requirements for instructors. This includes:
   1. Teaching the course for the full 8 hours
   2. Training to an audience of no less than 10 and no more than 30
   3. Providing hard-copy, non-duplicated manuals for each course participant
   4. Using current slides for all course sections
   5. Using current films for all course sections
   6. Providing a resource list to all course participants
6. Follow all data requirements in WIMS related to courses including:
   1. Registering all courses prior to course date
   2. Entering all course participants no later than 72 hours after course has taken place
   3. Collecting and providing to Mental Health First Aid USA all course evaluations (course data must be entered in order for the instructor to receive credit for the course).
7. Maintain “good standing” as an instructor requires:
   1. Teaching the course at least 3 times, each year
   2. Completing re-certification two years from the date of certification
   3. Passing Quality Evaluation visits and assessments
   4. Maintaining satisfactory evaluation scores
   5. Engaging in instructor/course re-fresher activities as required
   6. Keeping Instructor Profile Updated
   7. Adhering to program changes per MHFA USA direction
   8. Reading and responding to MHFA USA email communications

**Instructor Signature**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Employer Signature (if applying as an agent of your employer)**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Direct Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Direct Supervisor Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Submission directions**: Please return your completed application to <contact> at <contact email or other address> by <deadline date & time>.