



CDA E-Portfolio FAQs

Si desea leer las Preguntas Frecuentes sobre el portafolio electrónico CDA en español, [HAGA CLIC AQUÍ](#).

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CDA General Questions

What is the Child Development Associate® (CDA) National Credentialing Program?

The CDA National Credentialing Program is a professional development opportunity for early educators working with children aged birth to 5 years old to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities in the early childhood education field. The CDA® National Credentialing Program assesses candidates using multiple sources of evidence, including an exam, observation, and professional portfolio with resources and competency statements prepared by the candidate.

What do I need to do to complete the CDA® credentialing process?

To complete the CDA credentialing process you must:

- Meet all eligibility and training requirements
 - Any time before you apply:
 - High School Education
 - Professional Education- 120 hours
 - Within three years of submitting an application:
 - Work experience- 480 hours of experience working with children meeting the age requirements of the setting you are applying for.
 - Within six months
 - Family Questionnaires
 - Professional Portfolio
- Purchase a *CDA® Competency Standards* book in the setting of your work with children
- Submit a completed CDA application, which includes the Director’s Permission Statement, Professional Portfolio, and full payment
- Take the CDA® exam at a local Pearson Vue test center
 - Have your Professional Portfolio reviewed by Council Staff
 - Complete the CDA Verification Visit® with your PD Specialist, if necessary.

How do I find my Council Customer ID?

Your Council Customer ID can be found in YourCouncil (<https://yourcouncil.org>). YourCouncil is the system used to apply for the CDA credential. After you create an account and log in, you can find your Council Customer ID by clicking on the “Profile” link that appears when you hover over the account icon in the upper right corner of the screen. YourCouncil Customer ID will be listed at the top of the page.

Note that YourCouncil is separate from the E-Portfolio system, which is only used to create a portfolio. You must set up an account in each system. It is recommended that you use the same email address when setting up both accounts.

Will I need a CDA Competency Standards book?

Yes, all candidates are required to purchase a setting-specific *Competency Standards* book prior to applying and have the book during the CDA Verification Visit®. You will need to purchase a *Competency Standards* book in the setting of your work with children. The book provides details on requirements for the professional portfolio, which are specific for each setting.

How do I choose the correct CDA credential setting?

Review the settings below to determine which best describes your work with young children.

BIRTH TO FIVE: A center-based birth to five setting is a state-licensed or legally exempt child development center where a candidate can be observed working with a group of at least three children, all of whom are under 3 years old, or at least eight children, all of whom are 3 to 5 years old. For the Birth to Five CDA, a candidate must have 160 hours, as a paid employee or volunteer, in each sub-age group (infants, toddlers, and preschoolers), totaling 480 hours.

INFANT-TODDLER: A center-based infant-toddler setting is a state-licensed or legally exempt child development center where a candidate can be observed working with a group of at least three children, all of whom are under 3 years old. For the Infant-Toddler CDA, a candidate must have 480 hours, as a paid employee or volunteer, working with children under 3 years old.

PRESCHOOL: A center-based preschool setting is a state-licensed or legally exempt child development center where a candidate can be observed working with a group of at least eight children, all of whom are ages 3 through 5 years old. For the Preschool CDA, a candidate must have 480 hours, as a paid employee or volunteer, working with children ages 3 to 5 years old.

FAMILY CHILD CARE: A family child care setting is a family child care home where a candidate can be observed working with at least two children 5 years old or younger who are not related to the candidate by blood or marriage. The setting must meet at least the minimum level of applicable state and/or local regulations. Family child care settings are also eligible in localities where there is no regulation of family child care. For the Family Child Care CDA, a candidate must have 480 hours, as a paid employee or volunteer, working with children ages birth to five years.

HOME VISITOR: A home visitor setting is an established program of home visits (to families with children 5 years old or younger) that supports parents in meeting the needs of their young children. In this setting, regular home visits are the primary method of program delivery. Candidates for a Home Visitor credential follow a slightly different assessment process. For the Home Visitor CDA, a candidate must have 480 hours, as a paid employee or volunteer, working with families of children ages birth to five years old in a Home Visitor or Adult Education program.

What education/training is required to earn the CDA?

Candidates for Birth to Five, Preschool, Infant-Toddler, and Family Child Care settings must complete 120 hours of formal early childhood education training applicable to the setting with no fewer than 10 hours in each of the 8 CDA Subject Areas:

1. Planning a safe and healthy learning environment
2. Advancing children's physical and intellectual development
3. Supporting children's social and emotional development
4. Building productive relationships with families
5. Managing an effective program operation
6. Maintaining a commitment to professionalism
7. Observing and recording children's behavior
8. Understanding principles of child development and learning

Candidates for the Home Visitor CDA must complete 120 hours of formal early childhood education training and principles of adult learning with no fewer than 10 hours in each of the 8 CDA Subject Areas for Home Visitors:

1. Promoting health and safety in the home environment
2. Enhancing parents' skills to advance children's physical and intellectual development
3. Promoting parents' use of positive ways to support children's social and emotional development
4. Understanding family systems and development
5. Managing an effective home visitor program operation
6. Maintaining a commitment to professionalism
7. Working across the child welfare continuum
8. Understanding the principles of child development and learning

Formal education/training hours must be earned through an agency or organization with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation. The education/training hours can be for college credit or non-college credit. Training will not be accepted from independent consultants or conference workshops. The training agency or organization must verify your education in the form of an official transcript, certificate, or letter.

Education may be completed through a wide variety of organizations, including two- and four-year colleges, private training organizations, vocational or technical schools, resource and referral agencies, and early childhood education programs that sponsor training, such as Head Start or the U.S. military. You may accumulate the hours from a single program or a combination of programs. Each agency or organization must provide verification of your education in the form of a college transcript certificate, letter on official letterhead, or an approved state registry learning record.

What documentation is required for education/training?

Acceptable forms of education/training documentation include:

- College transcript from an accredited college or university
- Certificate of training
- Letter of training on official letterhead of the agency
- Learning record from an approved state registry

Documentation must include:

- Training agency name, address, and logo
- Course name(s)
Note: If course name does not include age reference, certificate must include ages covered
- CDA Subject Area of training
- Candidate's name
- Number of hours/credits awarded
- Dates of training
- Official signature of instructor

What can I expect during the CDA Verification Visit®?

Before the CDA Verification Visit, the PD Specialist will:

- Complete the Pre-Verification Checklist in order to gain access the candidate's uploaded Professional Portfolio
- Review the contents of your professional portfolio

During the CDA Verification Visit®, the PD Specialist will:

- Observe you working with children
- Utilize the Reflective Dialogue, focusing on your areas of strength or growth found in the portfolio or seen during the observation

CDA Portfolio Questions

What is the professional portfolio?

The professional portfolio is compiled independently by each candidate as part of the credentialing process. The compiled resources and documents are reviewed by the PD Specialist during the CDA Verification Visit®. The professional portfolio is composed of:

- Education/Training Documentation
- Family Questionnaires
- Resource Collection for each Competency Goal
- Six (6) Reflective Statements of Competence
- Professional Philosophy Statement
- Other forms required for your setting, which are available in your *CDA® Competency Standards* book and the E-Portfolio system.

When should I prepare my professional portfolio?

Prepare your portfolio within 6 months before you apply for your CDA credential.

Is the professional portfolio different for each setting?

While some components of the portfolio are consistent, there are many setting-specific requirements. Portfolio requirements are detailed in the Competency Standards book for each setting. The E-Portfolio system is designed to accommodate setting-specific requirements.

Where can I access the forms required to complete my professional portfolio?

All required forms are available in your Competency Standards book, and through the E-Portfolio system. Although you can access required forms in the E-Portfolio system, you are still required to purchase the Competency Standards book for your setting. The Competency Standards book will guide you through the credentialing process, and it contains the Comprehensive Scoring Instrument that the PD Specialist will use during your CDA Verification Visit®.

If you are using the E-Portfolio system, you can complete required forms in any of the following ways:

- remove the forms in your Competency Standards book, then complete, scan, and upload
- download and print the forms from the E-Portfolio system, then complete, scan, and upload
- complete the e-forms within the E-Portfolio system

What resources are available to help me complete my professional portfolio?

CDA® Competency Standards books provide candidates with a detailed guide through the credentialing process and requirements, including preparation of the professional portfolio. Candidates applying for an initial CDA credential are required to purchase a Competency Standards book in the setting of their work with children.

The Council also provides the E-Portfolio system to help candidates complete their portfolios with ease. The system takes you through portfolio sections step-by-step to meet the setting-specific requirements outlined in the *CDA® Competency Standards* books. There are several resources you can access within the E-Portfolio system.

- The “Resource Library” includes required forms, general CDA information, and the E-Portfolio Overview Video, which you will also be able to view when you set up your E-Portfolio account.
- The “How to Upload and Download” page has videos on uploading and downloading. You will need to upload and download documents to complete your E-Portfolio. The videos also explain how to create electronic documents and images.
- The “My Uploads” page displays what you have uploaded arranged by section. You can download, review, delete, and replace your uploads as needed from this page.

Is there someone who can review my Reflective Statements of Competence?

The Council does not review portfolio content prior to submission. For support and guidance, we recommend asking your employer, colleague, coach, or CDA trainer to review your portfolio.

Note that third party review/approval of your portfolio does not guarantee you have met the Council's requirements. Use the Competency Standards book for your setting and the portfolio checklist to ensure nothing is missing. Upon submission, final portfolio review/approval is conducted by the Council.

E-Portfolio General Questions

What is the E-Portfolio?

The E-Portfolio (<https://yourcdaportfolio.org>) is a tool to help candidates collect and organize their portfolio requirements. Using the E-Portfolio system is not required.

You can create an “E-Portfolio” by using the E-Portfolio system to enter information and upload documents required in your professional portfolio. The E-Portfolio system takes you through portfolio sections step-by-step to meet setting-specific requirements outlined in the *CDA® Competency Standards* books. When you are ready, you will be able to create a PDF that you can save and upload into your CDA Initial Application. .

Disclaimer: This information explains the distinction between the **E-Portfolio system** and the **Professional Portfolio upload requirement**, which took effect on **February 2, 2026**. Only the **portfolio upload requirement** is part of the CDA® Credentialing Process.

The **E-Portfolio system** is an optional tool designed to help candidates create and organize their professional portfolio in a structured, user-friendly way. Candidates are **not required** to use the E-Portfolio system; it is provided as a resource to support preparation.

The **portfolio upload requirement** refers specifically to submitting a completed professional portfolio into the Council’s **YourCouncil** system as part of the CDA Initial Application process. While the E-Portfolio tool can help candidates prepare and organize materials, the actual uploading of the portfolio will occur within **YourCouncil**.

Portfolio different for each setting?

Yes, the E-Portfolio system is designed to accommodate requirements for each setting. When you set up your account, you will be prompted to select a CDA credential setting. Your selection will determine the version of the E-Portfolio that you complete.

What types of files can be uploaded into the E-Portfolio system?

JPEG, PNG, and PDF formats are accepted. Individual file size cannot exceed 20 MB. Note that you cannot upload certified or password-protected files. To include a certified or password-protected file in your E-Portfolio, consider the following methods:

- **Print to PDF:** Use "Print to PDF" in your printer settings to create a PDF file without encryption.
- **Scan and Save:** If you have access to a scanner, scan the hardcopy and save it as a PDF.
- **Convert to JPEG:** Convert each page to a JPEG, then assemble into a PDF.

Why does the Competency Standard book for my setting state a 500-word response for my reflective Competency Statements, while the E-Portfolio tool includes a 500-character limit? Can you clarify this difference?

We acknowledge that the current character count may present challenges, and we are actively working to increase the system's capacity as soon as possible.

How do I share my E-Portfolio with my training organization or mentor? Is there a way to share my work?

Currently, there are two ways you can share your work:

- Download the full portfolio and email it to your reviewer. See “How do I generate my E-Portfolio PDF” for information on how to download your E-Portfolio.
- Utilize the “Preview/Print” button to download and save sections where this is available. “Preview/Print” is available for the following sections:
 1. Competency Statement I
 2. Competency Statement II
 3. Competency Statement III
 4. Competency Statement IV
 5. Competency Statement V
 6. Competency Statement VI
 7. The Professional Philosophy Statement

This image shows the “Preview/Print” button. It is located on the bottom, left-hand side of each of the pages above.

The image shows a screenshot of an E-Portfolio form with three reflection questions. Each question has a 'Yes' and 'No' radio button option. At the bottom left, there is a 'Preview / Print' button circled in blue. To its right are 'Save Draft' and 'Save & Submit' buttons.

CS I-a - Menu Reflection
Review and think about the sample menu(s) you provided for your Resource Collection (RC I-2), and then respond to the following questions.

Did you design the menu?

Yes
 No

CS I-b - Learning Environment Design
Think about the learning environment where you will have your CDA Verification Visit® observation.

Did you design the learning environment?

Yes
 No

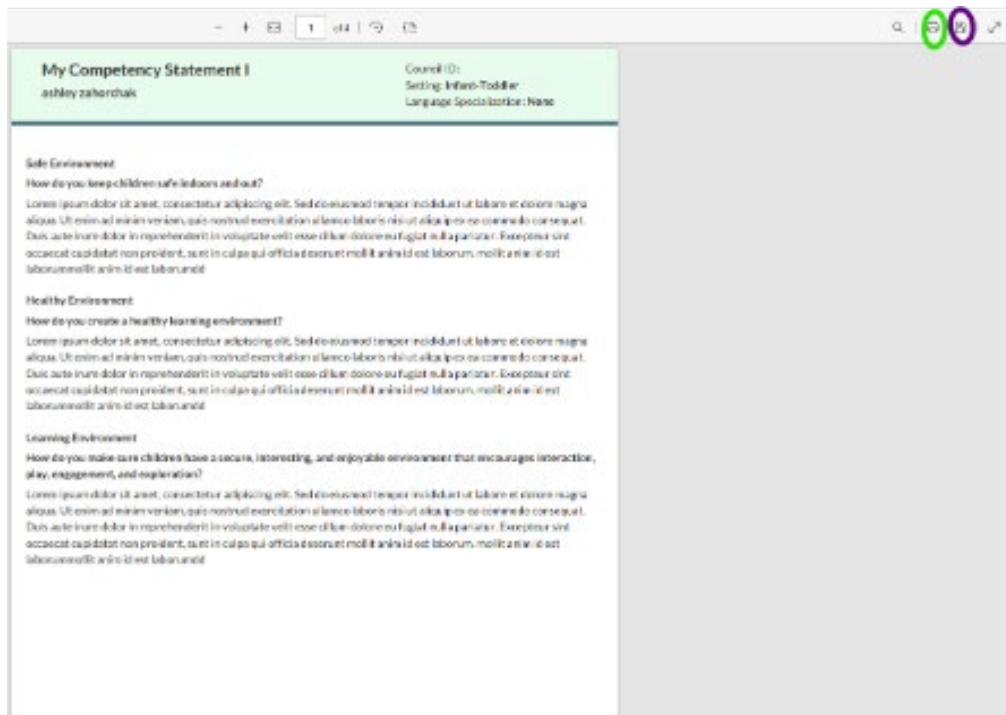
CS I-c - Weekly Plan Reflection
Think about the weekly plan you included in your Resource Collection (RC I-3):

Did you design this weekly plan?

Yes
 No

[Preview / Print](#) [Save Draft](#) [Save & Submit](#)

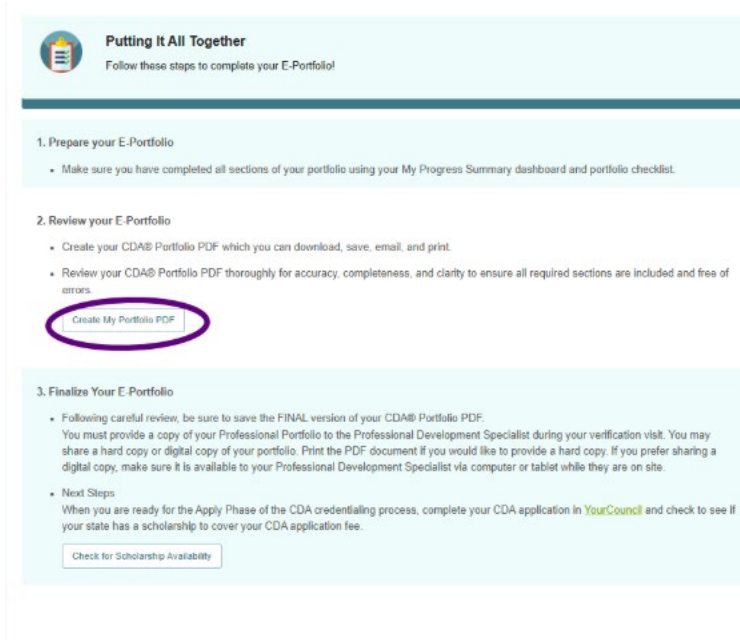
This is an image of the PDF document generated when you “Preview/Print” a section. You can print the document (print icon circled in green) or save the document (save icon circled in purple) to your device, then share your work with the person reviewing your portfolio.



How do I generate my E-Portfolio PDF?

Visit the “Putting It All Together” page in the E-Portfolio platform. Look for step 2, which is labeled “Review your E-Portfolio”. Click on the “Create My Portfolio PDF” button (image 1 below). The PDF will open in a new tab. In the new tab, you can save your PDF by utilizing the “save icon” (image 2, circled in purple). Save it to your device and then send it to your training organization or mentor via email. You also can print the PDF (image 2, circled in green).

1.

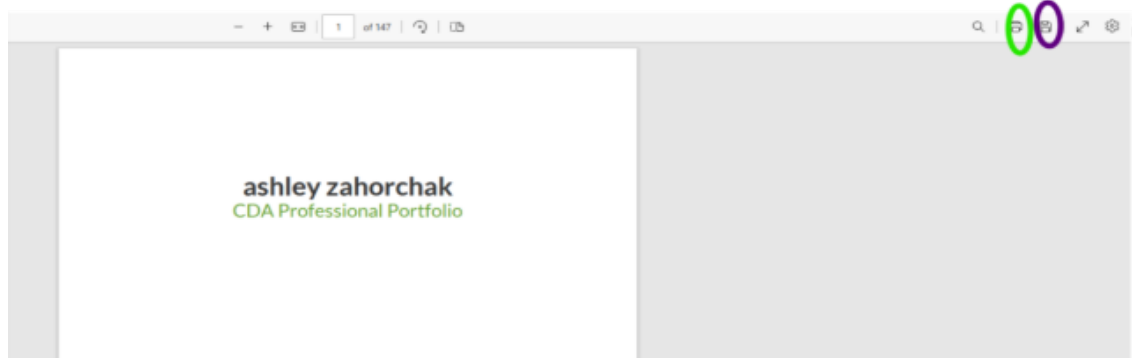


2.

Save Icon



Print Icon



How do I save my E-Portfolio PDF?

1. On the “Putting It All Together” screen, click the “Create My Portfolio PDF” button.
2. The PDF file should open automatically in a new browser tab.
3. Click the save icon, usually in the top-right corner of the screen.
4. When prompted, choose a location on your computer to save the file.
5. Rename the file using a clear and recognizable format — include your last name and the date.
6. Click Save.

Can I complete an E-Portfolio in Spanish?

Yes, you view the E-Portfolio system and generate your portfolio PDF in Spanish. You may change your display language anytime from your profile page.

While you can view instructions in English and Spanish, all content (responses to prompts, materials, and documents) must be in the language you consistently use with children in your work setting.

- If you primarily speak English with children, your portfolio contents must be in English.
- If you primarily speak Spanish, your portfolio contents must be in Spanish.
- If you use both English and another language daily, you may apply for a bilingual specialization. The E-Portfolio system supports this option when you select your CDA setting.

Can I complete an E-Portfolio with a bilingual specialization?

For bilingual specialization, a Candidate must have a working knowledge of both languages and work in a bilingual setting that requires the Candidate to speak both languages daily and consistently with children and families. Please refer to your Competency Standards book for more information regarding bilingual language specialization.

The E-Portfolio system is designed to incorporate bilingual specialization requirements for English and a second language, if bilingual specialization is selected during E-Portfolio account creation. Additional requirements include:

- Family Questionnaires - When inviting families to complete the Family Questionnaires, families should be asked to complete all questions, paying particular attention to Question #14, which is specific to bilingual programs.
- Resource Collection - The resources used directly with children and families must be presented in both languages (RC I-3, RC II, RC III, RC IV).
- Reflective Statements of Competence - For the Competency Statements, three statements are required in English and three are required in the other language. Candidates are free to decide which statements to write in English and in the other language. The statements must include information about how the candidate applies Principles of Dual Language Learning to their bilingual daily practice with children.
- Professional Philosophy Statement - The candidate may write the Professional Philosophy Statement in either language.

Note that the use of AI or any other translation service is not allowed.

What topics are covered in the E-Portfolio Video?

These topics are covered. For reference, timestamps are provided.

- 00:00 Welcome to the CDA E-Portfolio
- 01:01 Progress Summary
- 01:36 Navigation Bar/Menu
- 02:24 Mobile Device
- 02:52 User Profile
- 03:49 CDA Education
- 05:23 Competency Goals
- 06:43 Resource Collection I
- 07:30 Resource Collection II
- 08:14 Resource Collection III
- 08:41 Resource Collection IV
- 09:32 Resource Collection V
- 10:17 Resource Collection VI
- 11:27 Important Tip
- 11:45 Competency Statements
- 13:27 Family Questionnaires
- 14:11 Other Portfolio Requirements
- 15:31 Professional Philosophy Statement
- 15:53 CDA Professional Portfolio Checklist
- 16:19 Putting It All Together
- 17:14 Candidate Resources
- 18:27 Thank You

E-Portfolio Account Questions

Can I use my YourCouncil login information for the E-Portfolio system?

The E-Portfolio platform is separate from YourCouncil, the system you will use to complete and submit your CDA® application. Your login information for YourCouncil will not work for the E-Portfolio, and your login information for the E-Portfolio will not work for YourCouncil. Although not required, we recommend using the same email address for both accounts.

What should I do if I do not receive the E-Portfolio account verification email?

The account verification email will come from support@yourcdaportfolio.org. We recommend adding that email address to your safe list. The email may take a few minutes to come through. If you do not see the email in your inbox, be sure to check your junk/spam folder. If you are unable to find the email, contact Customer Support during business hours (8:00 AM to 7:00 PM EST Monday-Friday) at 800-424-4310 or via email to cdafeedback@cdacouncil.org.

How do I reset my password for the E-Portfolio system?

Go to the E-Portfolio login screen and click "Reset Password."

COUNCIL
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PROFESSIONAL
RECOGNITION

CDA

Note: The E-Portfolio site is not YourCouncil. It is a separate system that requires account registration. Click on "Don't have an account? Sign Up" if you are a new user of the E-Portfolio.

Email

Password

SIGN IN

Reset Password

Don't have an account? Sign Up

When prompted, enter your email address, then click "RESET PASSWORD."

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Enter your email address below and a email will be sent with instructions on how to reset your password.

Email

RESET PASSWORD

You will receive an email with instructions to reset your password. If you do not see the email, be sure to check your junk/spam folder.

What should I do if I need to switch my setting?

If you need to switch your setting, contact Customer Support for assistance (8:00 AM to 7:00 PM EST Monday-Friday) at 800-424-4310 or via email to cdafeedback@cdacouncil.org.

Before you contact Customer Support to change your setting, make sure you save your work (see the **How to Save Your E-Portfolio Guide** at the end of these FAQs). Some, but not all, of your responses will carry over after the switch. If you do not save your work outside of the E-Portfolio system, you will not be able to retrieve responses that do not carry over.

What should I do if I need to add or remove bilingual specialization?

If you need to update your language specialization, contact Customer Support for assistance (8:00 AM to 7:00 PM EST Monday-Friday) at 800-424-4310 or via email to cdafeedback@cdacouncil.org.

Before you contact Customer Support to change your language specialization, make sure you save your work (see the **How to Save Your E-Portfolio Guide** at the end of these FAQs). Some, but not all, of your responses will carry over after the switch. If you do not save your work outside of the E-Portfolio system, you will not be able to retrieve responses that do not carry over.

What should I do if I am seeking the CDA in more than one setting and need to create multiple portfolios?

If you are seeking the CDA in more than one setting and need to create multiple portfolios, you can:

1. Complete your E-Portfolio for the first setting in its entirety, save your final portfolio PDF (see the **How to Save Your E-Portfolio Guide** at the end of these FAQs), then contact Customer Support to change your setting. Some responses from the first portfolio will carry over to the new setting for you to update as needed. Other fields are setting-specific and will be blank when you start the new portfolio.
2. Create another account in the E-Portfolio system using a different email address and start your second portfolio from scratch.

The left-hand navigation bar in the E-Portfolio system vanished. How do I fix it?

If you do not see the left-hand navigation bar, save your progress, then refresh the screen. If this does not fix the issue, open your device's Settings to check that Display is set to 100%.

I entered text in every field, but I cannot click save. How do I fix it?

The likely issue is one or more fields contain text that auto populated. If you type or copy/paste text into each field, this should resolve the issue. If you do select auto-populated text, deleting then retyping the last character should resolve the issue.

I tried uploading a profile picture, but it's not working. How do I fix it?

If you upload your profile picture but are unable to see it, here are a few tips to assist:

- Being centered in the photo is key.
- Photos that are square or tall work best.
- Wide/horizontal photos may not work as well because only the middle portion shows.

Note that uploading a profile picture is not required, nor is the picture included in the portfolio PDF generated by the E-Portfolio system.

Guide for How to Save Your E-Portfolio

This guide describes the process for preserving information entered into the E-Portfolio system.

To save everything in one document:

1. Go to the “Putting It All Together” page
2. Click the “Create My Portfolio PDF” button
3. Save the generated PDF to your device

If you prefer to save sections individually, here are detailed instructions:

1. Sections with Print/Preview Features (IT, PS, FCC, HV)

E-Portfolio users can save each of these sections as separate documents.

- Competency Statement I
- Competency Statement II
- Competency Statement III
- Competency Statement IV
- Competency Statement V
- Competency Statement VI
- Professional Philosophy Statement

2. Sections Unavailable for Print/Preview. (IT, PS, FCC, HV)

For these sections, content must be copied and pasted into another document.

- Resource Collection I
- Resource Collection II
- Resource Collection III
- Resource Collection IV
- Resource Collection V
- Resource Collection VI

3. Sections that Contain Uploaded Documents

All uploaded documents can be saved as separate documents from the “My Uploads” page.

- CDA Education Documentation
- Resource Collection I-1
- Resource Collection I-2
- Resource Collection I-3 (IT, PS, FCC only)
- Resource Collection IV-4
- Resource Collection V
- Resource Collection VI-1

- Resource Collection VI-2 (HV only)
- Family Questionnaires

4. Sections with E-Forms or Upload Finished Forms

For the portfolio items below, E-Portfolio users may either complete e-forms within the system or upload finished forms. Download and save the forms on your device if you would like to use these documents outside of the system. The forms are also available in your Competency Standards book.

- Summary of My CDA Education
- Family Questionnaires Summary
- My CDA Portfolio Checklist