Frequently Asked Questions
ABSA Registered Biosafety Professional (RBP)
ABSA Certified Biological Safety Professional (CBSP)

Q: **What is the difference between the Registered Biosafety Professional (RBP) credential and the Certified Biological Safety Professional (CBSP) credential? Do I need to obtain one before the other?**

A: The RBP and CBSP are distinct and independent biosafety credentials. An RBP is not needed to obtain a CBSP or vice versa. The differences between the RBP and the CBSP are as follows:

**Registered Biosafety Professional (RBP)**
An RBP is an individual with documented university education or specialized training in relevant biological safety disciplines. Eligibility requirements include a minimum of 5 year-equivalents of practical experience in biosafety, or a combination of education and directly related work experience. *Note: A year-equivalent is one year of full-time biosafety experience.* For an applicant with 50% of their work focused on biosafety, two years of professional experience would yield one year-equivalent of biosafety experience.

**Certified Biological Safety Professional (CBSP)**
A CBSP meets specific educational requirements with at least 3 semester hours in microbiology. Professional experience will need to be demonstrated with at least 50% time spent in biosafety program management. Upon application approval, passes a written exam.

Q: **Do I need to send in my application and application fee together?**

A: No. However, the application materials will not be submitted to the Board for review until payment is received.

Q: **What constitutes a Baccalaureate degree in a physical or biological science discipline (a relevant discipline)?**

A: The physical and biological sciences areas listed below would be accepted for a Baccalaureate degree. Other degrees must be reviewed for acceptability on a case-by-case basis, by the Credentialing Evaluation Board (CEB).

Q: **What comprises a Master’s or Doctoral degree in a relevant discipline?**

A: The biological sciences areas listed below would be accepted for an advanced degree (Master’s or Doctoral). A Master’s in Public Health (MPH) is unlikely to satisfy the modification of the criteria unless it has a direct application to biological safety. An MPH in health or safety policy or management is not likely to be accepted. The course work required for each individual program will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis. Examples **may** include:
Q: **How does the Credentialing Evaluation Board (CEB) ensure unbiased review of credential application submissions?**

A: The CEB evaluates each submission based on a transparent and uniform set of criteria; conflict of interest provisions have been established. Board members are approved by the ABSA Council and adhere to a high standard of professional integrity and ethics.

Q: **How do I show that as a consultant I have biosafety program management experience?**

A: Obtain a written reference from the manager of the department(s) you are providing biosafety consulting services that:

- verify you are managing the biosafety program on behalf of their company (e.g., you are acting as the facility BSO)
- outline the scope of the biosafety program you manage. The reference should include how many hours per day, per week, per month you spend managing their program.
Q: What does the Credentialing Evaluation Board (CEB) consider as acceptable ‘professional biological safety experience’?

A: To qualify as acceptable biosafety experience, the applicant’s principal responsibility must be in the management and direction of a biosafety program. Although biosafety program management does not need to be the applicant's only responsibility.

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<tr>
<th>Adequate Examples of Biorisk Program Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approve Biorisk assessments involving work with infectious agents, GMOs, challenge animals, and plant pathogens. Recommend and approve risk mitigating control strategies.</td>
<td>Approve Risk Assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biosafety Officer on facility IBC. Advise on risk mitigating control, Risk management and communication strategies. Approve Biorisk assessments for the facility.</td>
<td>Participate on an IBC</td>
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<td>Write and deliver biosafety training including OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen, General Biosafety, Safe Work with Viral Vectors, How to run an IBC, Large Scale Biosafety, Agent Specific Biosafety Training, Biosafety Awareness Training for Maintenance, contract personnel, etc.</td>
<td>Perform training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write and/or approve Biorisk management policy, procedures and/or SOPs for laboratories, large scale process areas and animal facilities handling infectious agents.</td>
<td>Implement laboratory SOPs and biosafety program</td>
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<td>Represent Biosafety on Engineering Teams designing containment facilities including laboratory, animal facility or large scale. Ensure design criteria are adequate to mitigate risk of contamination spread. Participate on team to write Engineering Design Standards for the construction of laboratory, large scale, and animal facilities.</td>
<td>Participate on Engineering Project Teams</td>
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Q: Can ABSA provide a specific course of study that will lead to registration or certification as a Biosafety Officer?

A: There are a number of Biosafety Fellowship Programs available to help strengthen the biosafety professional. Some examples are:

- National Biosafety and Biocontainment Training Program (NBBTP)
- The University of Chicago Biosafety Training

ABSA also offers a number of educational opportunities, including:

- Principles & Practices of Biosafety (PPB)
- ABSA Biosafety and Biosecurity (BBTC) Training Course
- Advanced Biosafety Training Series
Q: My application to become an RBP was initially denied by the Credentialing Evaluation Board (CEB). I now feel I have overcome the deficiency listed, what is needed to request reconsideration?

A: If your initial application was reviewed within the past 12 months, you need to submit a letter to the CEB to request reconsideration and you must supply any supporting documents that demonstrate you have met the deficiency. If more than 12 months have passed, you will need to submit the entire application packet (excluding your transcripts), including the application fee.

Q: My request for reconsideration to become an RBP was denied. Is there an appeal process?

A: Any denial of credentials may be eligible for appeal by the applicant one time to the Credentialing Evaluation Board (CEB) as follows:

- If an applicant receives a denial of his or her application from the CEB, he or she may submit written notice to the CEB for reconsideration. If the applicant is not satisfied with the CEB’s response, he or she may submit a written notice requesting an appeal to the ABSA President no later than 14-days after the denial is issued. The appeal must be based on a factual and or procedural issue with regard to the review and denial. No other issues or matters shall be considered.

- The ABSA President shall refer the matter to the Council. The Council will be provided with the necessary information to conduct an appeal review. The review will take place during a Council meeting with a quorum of Council members present. The Council shall only consider the factual and or procedural issues stated with particularity in the written notice and no other issues.

- If the Council confirms the denial, the decision is final, and no other appeal process shall be available to the applicant. If the denial is not confirmed, the Council shall remit the matter to the CEB with recommendations on addressing any factual or procedural issues, along with instructions to conduct a re-review. If the CEB again denies the applicant, the decision is final, and no further appeal is available.