

## MRTQ PDN Credential Cohort: Participant Overview

*The Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce define peer-to-peer networks (cohorts, communities of practice, professional learning communities) as "groups of practitioners engaging to improve their skills and knowledge through collaborative study, expertise exchange, and professional dialogue." The cohort model provides an opportunity for a group of individuals or programs to proceed towards achieving a common goal within a defined timeframe.*

### What is a Credential Cohort?

A Credential Cohort is a group of practitioners who work together with a trained facilitator to share resources and support around earning a Maine Credential:

- Family Child Care
- Infant Toddler
- Youth Development
- Director
- Inclusion
- Technical Assistance

The Maine Credentials promote workforce competence for early childhood and out-of-school time professionals. A person holding a Maine Credential is recognized as having knowledge, skills, and competence in the designated Maine Credential.

*"The portfolio was a new and overwhelming idea to face on my own. The cohort helped to keep me on task and to figure out the goal of each assignment."*

*- Cohort participant*



### How do I join a Credential Cohort?

If you meet the eligibility requirements detailed in the Credential Cohort FAQs: <https://mrtq.org/credential-cohort-faqs/>, including completing the necessary training (or are enrolled in the final training) and are prepared to compile your portfolio with the goal of applying for a Maine Credential, please contact [mrtq.credentials@maine.edu](mailto:mrtq.credentials@maine.edu) to receive a link to the cohort request form. Participation is FREE!

### What are my responsibilities when participating in a Credential Cohort?

Cohort participants agree to:

- Complete the necessary forms/documentation to become an active MRTQ Registry member.
- Participate in cohort meetings (participants earn MRTQ PDN professional growth hours for attending) and ongoing cohort activities.
- Create a professional portfolio (as outlined in the Maine Credential Information Packets found at <https://mrtq.org/mainecredentials/>) by the end of the cohort.

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### **What is the time commitment?**

Cohorts meet monthly for up to two hours for approximately six months.

Participants must complete activities between meetings (approximately 2-4 hours per month) in order to prepare to submit an application for a Maine Credential.



*"[Participating in the cohort] has helped me focus and recognize where my strengths are, and what areas in my work and program I can continue to develop."*

Cohort participant

*"I have gained connections with other caregivers and trainers who were also in the cohort."*

- Cohort participant

### **How will participation in the cohort help me earn a Maine Credential?**

Cohort participants will receive:

- Facilitator and peer support to develop a portfolio that demonstrates the required competencies for the Credential.
- Individualized assistance from the facilitator, which may include review of draft portfolio assignments and help preparing for the on-site observation or interview (as applicable).

*Please note that participation in an MRTQ PDN Credential Cohort is voluntary and does not guarantee that an individual will be awarded a Maine Credential.*