



NWMAF Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) Instructor Certification

Application *Revised May 2024*

Overview

Thank you for your interest in becoming a National Women's Martial Arts Federation (NWMAF) Certified Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) Instructor. The NWMAF has been at the forefront of certifying and supporting empowerment self-defense (ESD) Instructors for over 35 years. By undertaking the journey to NWMAF certification, you will be working towards recognition as an experienced practitioner exemplifying the highest standards of quality and professionalism in the field. In addition, you will become part of our network of certified instructors, an engaged, collaborative, and supportive community of ESD practitioners.

NWMAF Certification remains valid for five years from your certification date as long as your yearly NWMAF membership is up-to-date. To be eligible to be recertified, you must meet the requirements of membership, participation, and service. We look forward to accompanying you on your certification journey and welcoming you into our international network of affiliated instructors. Begin your journey by reading the information on Empowerment Self Defense [on the NWMAF website](#).

Below you will find:

- The eligibility requirements for NWMAF ESD Instructor Certification
- Benefits of NWMAF Certification
- Certification application checklist
- The review process

Eligibility For NWMAF Empowerment Self-Defense (ESD) Instructor Certification

NWMAF Empowerment Self-Defense Certification is designed to recognize women, trans, and nonbinary instructors with significant and broad knowledge and teaching experience in Empowerment Self-Defense. Certified instructors demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of ESD principles and ethical practices. They are highly skilled in teaching awareness, verbal, and physical self-defense skills and can craft safe and welcoming environments for participants of all identities, abilities, and backgrounds.

Benefits of Certification

- Establishing recognized professional credentials to attract students, funding, partnerships, and collaborations
- Joining a network of knowledgeable and experienced ESD Instructors who are leaders in the field

- Sharing skills and building relationships with other ESD instructors
- Accessing documents, curricula, and reflections on teaching philosophy and practice, invaluable aids for program development and instructor training
- Documenting your curricula, policies, and practices

Certification Application Checklist

- Current NWMAF membership. You must be a current member of NWMAF for your application to be accepted. Visit the NWMAF website <<https://nwmaf.org/join/>>for membership information.
- Attend at least one NWMAF annual, regional, or virtual conference, including completing the ESD Model Course and additional ESD sessions for a total of 12 hours.
- In-depth training in ESD
- At least 3 years of consistent ESD teaching
- Completed application questionnaire (see below)
- Supporting documentation (Where noted, links can be found on the Instructor Certification page <<https://nwmaf.org/resources/empowerment/instructor-certification>>
 - Written curriculum for short workshop (1-3 hours)
 - Written curriculum for multi-session course (8-24 or more hours)
 - Video recording or an NWMAF-approved observer's report of a short workshop or introductory session of a multi-session course.
 - References: Completed reference forms from three individuals with first-hand knowledge of your teaching and/or training. The link is on the Instructor Certification page.
 - Signing the ESD Code of Ethics. The link is on the Instructor Certification page
- Application Fee: \$125.00 (US funds). Link is on the Instructor Certification page. The fee may be negotiable. Contact certification@nwmaf.org.

The Review Process

1. The Certification Coordinator will recruit two certified NWMAF ESD instructors to review the application materials. The reviewers will develop a timeline for the review and will communicate that timeline to the applicant.
2. Once the initial review is complete, the reviewers may request a follow-up meeting with the applicant to discuss the application.
3. Reviewers may request additional information and/or suggest additional training or preparation before recommending certification.
4. The applicant will receive written feedback from the reviewers.
5. When the certification decision is made, applicants are notified immediately. Formal awards of certification are made at the next annual conference.

NWMAF Application for ESD Instructor Certification

This application is a pdf and has two parts: an overview of the application process (pp 1-2) and the application itself. Please create a WORD or other text document in which you answer the application questions and submit the application and supporting documents to certification@nwmaf.org. In the file name, please include ESD application, your last name, and the year (e.g. ESD Application_Thompson2024).

For links to the NWMAF membership page, reference forms, ESD Code of Ethics, and payment, please see the NWMAF certification webpage <<https://nwmaf.org/resources/empowerment/instructor-certification>>.

General Information

Name: _____

Gender Identity: _____

Pronouns: _____

Address: _____

City _____

State or Country _____ Zip or Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Links to your social media:

Self-Defense Background and Experience

Provide evidence of in-depth training in Empowerment Self-Defense.

- Describe your motivation for becoming an Empowerment Self-Defense instructor and seeking certification from NWMAF.
- Please let us know if you are also a member of, or certified by, any other self-defense organization and, if so, which one(s).
- Describe your training as an instructor of Empowerment Self-Defense
 - a. How did you learn to be an Empowerment Self-Defense instructor? Please describe in detail.
 - b. Are you connected to other NWMAF-certified instructors or an NWMAF-affiliated school? Describe your level of physical self-defense training in detail, including learning and teaching adrenaline management, generating physical power, and projecting physical confidence.
 - c. List the sessions (year and title, if applicable) of the NWMAF Self-Defense Empowerment Model Course/s in which you have participated and the instructor(s)' name. Briefly describe your most important "takeaways" from this experience. If you have not or are unable to attend the NWMAF annual, regional, or online conference, please contact certification@nwmaf.org for other options.
 - d. List additional NWMAF ESD workshops you completed at the NWMAF annual conference or in online or regional sessions.
 - e. Describe additional training and experiences that have contributed to 1) your understanding of gender and violence; 2) your ability to communicate effectively with

students of diverse races, economic and social backgrounds, sexualities, ages, etc.; 3) your ability to work effectively with survivors of violence; and 4) your ability to create a physically and emotionally safe learning environment for all students.

Describe your self-defense teaching experience.

Provide evidence of extensive hands-on teaching of Empowerment Self-Defense and commitment to the ESD Code of Ethics.

- How and when did you meet the required minimum of 3 years of consistent teaching as a primary or co-instructor of Empowerment Self-Defense? Include a document listing the programs you have taught or co-taught including the total number of hours of each class/course and which audiences they served.
- Describe how you balance awareness, verbal, and physical skills components of your curriculum.
- Describe your experience in teaching students who are different from you in terms of age, ability/disability, gender identity, national origin, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, social class, etc.
- Describe lessons you have learned from working with students whose experience of violence is different from your own and what you have done to make your teaching relevant to them. Describe your strengths and challenges as a teacher. Please share a synopsis of any data collected (if any) on the efficacy and impact of your classes.

Describe/document your policies and/or practices as required by the ESD Code of Ethics, for

example: (link is on the Instructor Certification page

<https://nwmaf.org/resources/empowerment/instructor-certification>)

- Creating physical and emotional safety for students, staff, and community partners (e.g. sexual harassment, sexual or intimate relationships, consent for touch).
- Maintaining financial integrity (e.g. making programs financially accessible, handling refunds and cancellations, and paying instructors).
- Creating accessibility, inclusion, empowerment, and social justice (e.g. welcoming people who experience marginalization, inclusive language, accessible techniques, affirmation of human rights).
- Maintaining professional competence (e.g. continuing education, evidence-based teaching, conduct evaluations/research of your programs).
- Maintaining professional boundaries (e.g. have a support system other than your students, sharing personal information—yourself and students).

Supporting Documentation [send as attachments along with your answers to the application questions to certification@nwmaf.org]:

Evidence of ESD Curricula Development

Written curriculum for short workshop (1-3 hours)

Written curriculum for multi-session course (8-24 hours)

Format for submitted curricula:

- Use an outline format with clear time allocations given for each section
- Avoid jargon that your reviewer may not understand (i.e. the 1-2-3 drill)

- Indicate whether the type of activity, i.e. lecture, small group discussion, line drill, partner work, role play, etc.
- Include any additional instructor notes that support your outline.

Evidence of Teaching Ability

Observations of your teaching. Options include:

- Providing a video recording of one of your short workshop programs. *This video will be viewed only by the reviewers and possibly by the Empowerment Self-Defense Certification Coordinator.*
- Inviting one of the NWMAF Reviewers to observe or participate in one of your workshops **in person**
- Making it possible for one of the NWMAF Reviewers to observe your workshop **remotely**.

Note: Contact certification@nwmaf.org to arrange for reviewer observation.

Reference Forms [submitted by your references]

Completed reference forms from three individuals with first-hand knowledge of your teaching and/or training. Link is on NWMAF certification page.

Signing the ESD Code of Ethics: All applicants for NWMAF Empowerment Self-Defense Certification must be signatories to the ESD Code of Ethics. Link is on the NWMAF certification page.