



Program Overview & Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

Cycling Instructors Association of Canada (CIAC) was formally incorporated as a non-profit organization on January 31, 2020. CIAC is the owner and administrator of a program to provide excellence in the profession of bicycle teaching, for delivery of functional bicycle courses across Canada.

We are the only organization which has the authority to grant certification to bicycle instructors in Canada and our focus is to train instructors to deliver consistent, standardized material to Canadians who want to ride a bike for any purpose. Our focus is on use of the bike for transportation, recreation or employment, not for competition, though the skills and knowledge can easily be transferred to many competitive cycling styles.

Courses are delivered by Certified Instructors to the public (or private groups) and instructors are trained and certified by Course Conductors. Course Conductors are also qualified to teach courses to the public.

Course Descriptions

Courses listed for children require the completion of the Teaching Children stream; courses for those age 14 or older require the completion of the Teaching Adults stream.

First Time: for those age 4 or older to learn how to ride a bike.

Beginner: for new teen (14 years or older) and adult cyclists to build confidence and basic skills in order to ride on paved pathways.

Novice: cyclists age 7 and up are introduced to handling skills and may be introduced to very quiet residential road riding.

Intermediate: competent cyclists 9 years old and up learn how to ride on residential roads. *Intermediate is the most valuable course in the CIAC program.*

Advanced: more capable teen (16 years old and older) and adult cyclists increase their skills and abilities in order to ride on the road in busy commercial areas, such as downtown.

Add On Modules: to meet the needs of specialized groups, additional information modules will be available for use with most courses. These modules include (but may not be limited to):

- special needs children or adults ex autism, hard of hearing, visual impairments, physical disability
- seniors
- bicycling with children, especially young children
- use of bike trailers and/or cargo bikes
- e-bikes
- security, police, EMS and/or search and rescue
- riding at night
- rural riding

For example, you may teach a First Time for seniors or add-on trailers & biking with small kids to parents of pre-schoolers taking an Intermediate or Advanced for police with a night ride.

Instructor Training: taught exclusively by Course Conductors, this course will cover all theory and practical elements necessary to teach the courses listed above. Presented in a progressive, modular format, instructor candidates will receive information regarding site selection, insurance, risk mitigation, class management, and age-specific teaching techniques (choosing one or both age specific streams) and progress through the program to their desired level.

Types of Instructors

Instructors are trained up to their desired level but are not necessarily certified to teach all courses below. Course Conductors can teach courses as well as train and certify new instructors to levels they are certified for.

- Level 1: Instructors can teach First Time courses; Course Conductors can certify Level 1 instructors.
- Level 2: Instructors can teach Novice courses and Beginner if the adult teaching stream chosen; Course Conductors can certify Level 1 and 2 instructors.
- Level 3: Instructors can teach Novice and Intermediate courses; Course Conductors can certify Level 1, 2 and 3 instructors.
- Level 4: Instructors can teach Novice, Intermediate and Advanced courses; Course Conductors can certify Level 1, 2, 3 and 4 instructors

As part of the certification process and maintenance of certification, Instructors can choose which courses they will teach. Age streams are also reflected in listings as such: a Level 1, 2, 3, 4 (adults) Instructor can teach First Time, Beginner, Novice, Intermediate and Advanced courses to adults only: no participants under age 16. However, a Level 1, 2 (children) Instructor can teach First Time and Novice to children only; the Beginner course is only for adults therefore this instructor would not be qualified to teach this course.

Course Conductors must have completed the teaching adults module and may be certified to teach more levels than they can certify new instructors to. For example: a Course Conductor Level 3, Instructor Level 4 (adults) can teach First Time, Beginner, Novice, Intermediate and Advanced courses to adults only and can train and certify new instructors to Level 1, 2 or 3. Note Course Conductors may not be eligible to teach children's courses but can deliver the teaching children module to instructor candidates. A Level 4 (children and adults) Course Conductor can teach all courses to children or adults as applicable as well as train and certify new instructors up to Level 4. **Note for 2022, CIAC is not granting Course Conductor status to enable all Members to get up to speed with new material and processes.**

Expectations of Instructors

CIAC's bicycling program is standardized and centralized, but we don't lay out a required method of teaching. We recognize that, like roads, there are many ways to get to the desired "destination" and the approach will vary based on the location of teaching, number, ages and abilities of participants as well as the experience level of the instructor. Some instructors may work solo, some may have untrained volunteers or carefully trained paid employees working with them: there's a myriad of variables. As such, all CIAC Instructors are given the freedom and flexibility to teach without having to conform to a specific method. However, there are a number of expectations that all Instructors will be held to, including:

- Maintain valid annual membership, including payment of associated membership fees.

- Remain an active Instructor, teaching at least 1-2 courses per year unless due to injury, illness, pregnancy/maternity, or similar reason.
 - Instructors who fail to instruct courses for 2 years without valid reason will not be eligible for renewal without re-certification.
- Agree to follow the Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and Helmet Policy.
- Maintain adequate liability insurance, either through the Instructors employer, contractor or separate insurance policy.
- Maintain First Aid (minimum Emergency with CPR C & AED) certification.
- If working with children (under age 18), seniors (age 65 or older), disabled or other vulnerable persons, maintain a clear police Vulnerable Sector check through the RCMP or your local municipal police force.
- Agree to follow CIAC curriculum, including the use of online learning for participants in Intermediate or Advanced courses;
 - These courses may be presented in an offline learning situation, however, participant knowledge evaluation must ensure a complete understanding of all material
 - Instructors are responsible for entering and monitoring their own participant's progress through the online learning platform.
- Register all participant-owned bikes with Project 529 or verify previous registration.
- Submit required participant information to CIAC for tracking purposes, including name, email address, date(s) of course(s) and whether the participant was successful at meeting course expectations.
- Submit participant fees to CIAC as follows:
 - \$2 for each participant in a First Time, Beginner or Novice course.
 - \$5 for each participant in an Intermediate or Advanced course.
- Evaluate all course participants in a fair manner, disregarding all personal bias
 - Evaluations of Advanced participants as possible Instructor Candidates will involve the assessment of character and soft skills and should remain as unbiased as possible while accepting that some character evaluations involve personal feelings.
- Be part of the team: setting personal feelings aside, be willing to assist other CIAC Instructors to ensure that the program offers an excellent experience to participants. This doesn't mean you have to assist with delivery of courses, but you should answer questions relating to the delivery of courses and not make things more difficult for other instructors. We will not accept Instructors "competing" with other Instructors.

Failure to comply with these expectations may result in rescinding of Certification.

Membership Screening

Regular Membership is available only by application for first-time members. Application is not a guarantee of acceptance. All applicants are screened by analyzing their cycling CV (summary of cycling related education, certifications, and experience rather than a list of skills) to see whether you have relevant experience, are invested in improving yourself, and that you align with our organizational goals. We judge whether or not we think we can trust you to follow our curriculum, how you will behave with participants, and if you're willing to help other instructors be their best. We will provide you with feedback if your application isn't accepted so that you can improve your application and re-apply at a later date.

Regular Member Benefits

In addition to the obvious - that Membership equals Certification - the benefits to becoming a Regular Member include:

1. Access to a complete contact list for all Instructors, Course Conductors and Instructors-in-Training (active and expired), a forum to discuss courses, share tips and tricks, brag about successes or even flag course participants for other instructors to avoid,
2. The full curriculum content available 24/7 on Moodle so you never have to wonder what to teach or how to teach it,
3. CIAC-hosted online learning for participants in Intermediate and Advanced courses so you know all participants are getting standardized, relevant material and you will know exactly what a participant learned if they took a course in a different location in Canada.
4. Certified Instructors will have the ability to purchase liability insurance through CIAC (at a group rate), covering all your activities for a full year with no need to provide paperwork in advance of every course, presentation, informal bike ride or discussion you have.
5. You will get wholesale pricing on Project 529 Shields even if you only get a small quantity, allowing you to provide a valuable service to your participants at very little cost to yourself, and/or you can sell them for a profit.
6. Voting rights at our AGM as well as Member's meetings: you get to be involved in choosing our Board Members, and expressing your opinion on the operation of CIAC.
7. CIAC will engage in annual curriculum reviews, ensuring that all curriculum includes changes to laws, policies, teaching practices or anything else that's necessary to ensure all courses delivered are relevant and appropriate. We will ask for your help to ensure we have appropriate videos, photos, drawings, games, presentation materials, etc to make every instructor's job easier and/or more effective.
8. Members will be able to join committees, to shape various parts of our operations. Committees will be involved in screening membership applications, writing/updating curriculum, promotion of CIAC, securing grants and much more.
9. Last but certainly not least, our Board of Directors will be composed entirely of Regular Members: we insist on being an organization run by people who actually know what they're teaching. Non-member advisors will be consulted, but the decisions will be made by actual Instructors.

Membership Value

Why should you pay CIAC \$150 a year?

1. Professional organization: you'd expect a doctor, engineer or plumber to be registered with their professional organization, right? CIAC is the professional organization for bicycle instructors. We aren't the same as mountain bike instructors or racing coaches: we're complimentary to both but different. Being a CIAC Member shows that you're a Professional Bicycle Instructor and all people will understand that means you follow a code of ethics, code of conduct, and teach the same things as a Professional Bicycle Instructor somewhere else. You can be trusted in a way that a self-professed "expert" won't be.
2. Access to group rate insurance: no more fussing with securing insurance before each course, paying per participant or worrying if you're covered. You'll get a better rate than if you insured individually because we have many instructors. Plus you're covered everywhere in Canada, even if you teach a course outside your home municipality.
3. Supports our work: your membership fee helps pay for our website hosting, organization insurance, and things like printing and mailing costs. It also helps to

subsidize the cost of training of new instructors who may not be able to afford the Instructor Training course (or travel costs to attend), and allows us to sponsor Instructors to deliver courses to disadvantaged groups for free.

4. Pays back quickly: we're not asking for thousands of dollars; it doesn't take long to make back your Membership fees. Examples:
 - a. 2 First Time Adult participants at \$100 each (with no associated costs to run the course)
 - b. 3 Intermediate Child participants at \$125 each (with an assistant paid \$15/hr x 8 hrs)
 - c. 1 Advanced participant at \$175 (with no associated costs to run the course)
5. Learn from others: you will have access to every Instructor and Course Conductor's email address and a forum where you can lean upon the experience of others to advance your own abilities. We don't expect anyone to come from a teaching background and/or understand child development: all of our material takes advantage of years of experience and expert input to give you everything you need to teach, and if you don't understand a concept, want to get clarification on something or ask about something that's not covered, you have full and complete access to every Member.

Frequently Asked Questions

You asked, we answer. Here's what others have been asking about CIAC.

1. *What is CAN-BIKE not doing that CIAC can/will do? Why is CIAC better for myself and the customer?*

CAN-BIKE is a subsidiary of Cycling Canada, and neither actually has the authority to grant certification: Cycling Canada is a sport organization, not a governing body. The people who have been "running" CAN-BIKE for the last decade haven't even taken a course, let alone know anything about teaching the courses. Further, they're not focused on CAN-BIKE: it's a side gig that gets a little of their attention every now and then. Despite repeated claims that Cycling Canada supports the CAN-BIKE program, they have provided zero funding for it and have seemed to have worked against it by not even accounting for the CB fees openly, developing competing programs and refusing to integrate CB programs into their racing development programs (if you can't ride a bike, how can you race? if you don't know how to ride on the road, how can you train?). Literally hundreds of hours and significant financial investment by professionals were put in but they refused to integrate the very well written, thorough curriculum offered or even update the curriculum as directed to by a committee they set up to literally do just that.

CIAC is different because:

- we are set up to be a regulatory body for professional cycling instructors, similar to ski instructors, yoga instructors, etc. In fact, much of our structure and processes are modelled from the Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance. This gives us the authority to grant certification to instructors.
- we are run by instructors and always will be. Decisions made will always be by people who actually walk the walk and therefore understand how to teach the material.
- CIAC is 100% dedicated to the development and maintenance of professional cycling instructors: this is the entire point of its existence.
- all of the funds that come in to CIAC, whether by membership fees, grants, participant fees or course registrations, is used to further CIAC's mandate. None of the money will be used for other purposes.
- all curriculum we have is written and reviewed by actual instructors with years of experience and reviewed by experts. We will also be doing an annual review to get input

from all instructors on what's changed, what's missing, what's unnecessary, what needs to be improved and implement changes every single year.

- CIAC members will also be involved on committees to evaluate membership applications and renewals to ensure that our instructors are professionals who want to do the best job possible to get Canadians of all shapes, sizes, ages and abilities more comfortable on bike; to ensure that the curriculum is current and integrates best practices; to write grants so that courses can be offered to those who can't afford it or to deliver courses without undue burden on participants and likely more.

2. If I join CIAC, what does that mean for my CAN-BIKE status?

Let's make it really clear: CIAC and CAN-BIKE are completely separate organizations. What CIAC does has no effect on CAN-BIKE and what CAN-BIKE does has no effect on CIAC.

We won't tell you not to keep your CAN-BIKE membership: you can if you want to. You can even teach CAN-BIKE courses. What we will tell you is that our program is written by and managed by actual instructors and is very current. We will do annual curriculum updates, involving all instructors. The CAN-BIKE curriculum hasn't changed since at least 2001, despite 2 years of effort recently by a committee set up to do exactly that. Every suggestion and even full curriculum written by professional curriculum writers was ignored or rejected. We think you'll find our program to be similar but significantly better.

3. The material seems to be focused all on instructor training and membership, or is it also meant to attract people to take bike courses?

CIAC is intended to be the regulatory body for cycling instructors, similar to the ski instructors or plumbing associations. Actually a lot of our operations were modelled on the Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance. The only courses CIAC offers are Instructor Training: all the other courses are delivered by certified cycling instructors, following CIAC curriculum and online learning for Intermediate and Advanced courses.

Membership equals certification: like how doctors pay their governing body to keep their license active. Membership gives you access to the curriculum, forum and full instructor contact lists, including instructors-in-training, and voting rights at our AGM and members meetings.

4. How do the courses differ between CIAC & CAN-BIKE?

While there are many similarities, there's also some big differences, too. Much of the curriculum will be familiar if you are/were previously a CAN-BIKE Instructor. However, there's 1 brand new course (Beginner), as well as road designations, material specifically covering cycling infrastructure, a much more robust and detailed online theory component for participants, as well as add-ons for working with people who have special needs, cargo bikes, e-bikes, who work security and for families and seniors.

5. Are there any courses I need to take with CIAC to be approved?

There won't be any CIAC courses you need to take to prove your eligibility, but if approved we will have a webinar or two to get everyone up to speed on the new curriculum and how to use it. You will need to provide evidence of your credentials in the form of a cycling CV as part of your application.

6. I don't have a cycling CV, why do I need one to apply? What is a CV?

A CV, or Curriculum Vitae, is similar to a resume but different. A regular resume provides an overview of one's skills, achievements and work experience in terms of showcasing one's abilities and competencies. A CV provides a comprehensive list of your credentials and experience, including publications, licenses, awards and a list of courses taught. If you're not sure what a CV should look like, we can send you one.

All applicants will go through a screening process to ensure certification is only given to those who "fit" with our goals and the vision we have for what a professional bicycling instructor will be. As an applicant with previous experience, we need to see a record of what you've been doing in order to figure out what if you're a good fit and what Level of Instructor would be appropriate for you. We know that 2020 and 2021 have been difficult and many may not have taught any courses: that's ok. We also don't need to see a full list of every course you've taught in the last 20 years (if you have that, send it in!) but the most recent 3-4 years are important to include. Once you've created a CV, it's easy to add to it.

7. I work through an organization: can the organization register a group of instructors?

In short, no. We can arrange for group applications, but each applicant is screened on an individual basis. We can't certify an organization as an instructor. We can accept payment for Membership fees by an organization.

8. What about corporate sponsorship?

Yes, we're open to considering corporate sponsorship. We'd be more than happy to promote a particular bike manufacturer, clothing line or even cellular phone provider in return for member discounts, assistance with events, or course fee subsidies for participants.

9. Can you explain how insurance works?

Absolutely! CIAC has arranged a deal for \$2 million in general commercial liability coverage. As a Certified Instructor with CIAC, you've already indicated your ability and willingness to be aware of and mitigate risks, so no application is necessary: we guarantee you will be covered. This one-time fee covers you for a full year for everything you do: any course you teach whether formal or informal, presentations, even if you help a stranger with a bike problem. You don't need to notify the insurance company when or where you're doing a course, or the number of participants. It doesn't matter if you teach 1 course or 100 courses: you're covered - though obviously you won't find there's a lot of value in this coverage if you only teach 1 course a year. You're even covered if you teach in a different municipality or even province from your home: as long as it's in Canada, you're covered.

You're not required to buy in to this insurance either, if you have other coverage, perhaps through the organization you teach through. However, you might want to get it in addition, so you can have coverage outside your normal working time, and you could even ask the organization to pay you back.

Full disclosure: CIAC charges an administration fee on your insurance.

10. What is Project 529 and why do I have to register bikes?

Project 529 is a proven bike registration system. In less than 5 minutes, a bike can be registered, recording critical information such as the make, model, serial number and owner's information. Photos of the bike and owner are included as part of the registration. An optional, add-on Shield (tamper-resistant sticker) provides a visible indication of bike registration, reducing the chances of a bike being stolen in the first place. Project 529 works globally; a bike registered in one place can be returned to its owner if recovered on the other side of the world! In Vancouver, where Project 529 was implemented first, bike theft was reduced by 30-55% just by completing the simple bike registration. More information can be found at <https://project529.com>

Studies have shown repeatedly that people who are a victim of bike theft often stop riding, either because they can't afford to replace their bike or they don't want to be victimized again. CIAC's goal is to grow the number of cyclists in Canada who use their bike for transportation or recreation. It's difficult to ride a bike if it's been stolen so we think we should help people reduce the chances of their bike being stolen by teaching them how to properly lock up their bike, and provide the extra layer of protection that Project 529's bike registry provides.