



INBGC

INDEPENDENT NATIONAL BOARD
FOR GRIEF COACHING

Employer Funding Packet

Board Certification in Grief Coaching

A funding request resource prepared for healthcare administrators, practice owners, and organizational decision makers supporting professional credentialing.

inbgc.org | support@inbgc.org

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Section 1 — Letter to the Funding Administrator

Thank you for considering support for your staff member's pursuit of the Board Certified Grief Coach (BCGC) credential through the Independent National Board for Grief Coaching.

This is a request to fund a professional credential, not a course. INBGC is a credentialing board. It provides no grief coach training at any price, and it has no financial interest in which program a candidate completed. What INBGC does is publish a standard for non-clinical grief coaching and verify that an individual meets it through eligibility review, education review against six published topic areas, verified practice hours, a proctored Board Examination, and an enforceable Code of Ethics. The credential is then maintained through annual renewal and continuing education, and a coach's standing can be confirmed independently by credential number.

Grief reaches nearly every population your organization serves. It follows death, and it also follows divorce, job loss, serious illness, estrangement, and major life transitions. Staff across healthcare, hospice, chaplaincy, funeral service, counseling, and coaching meet it constantly, often without grief-specific preparation or a defined scope for the non-clinical support they are already providing. The BCGC credential addresses that directly. It establishes that a practitioner holds grief-specific education, understands the boundary between coaching and clinical care, knows when to refer to a licensed professional, and answers to a published standard over the length of their career.

The distinction that usually matters most to a finance office is this one. Most professional development concludes with a certificate confirming attendance. Board certification requires a candidate to demonstrate competence before the credential is issued, and to keep demonstrating it to retain the credential. For that reason, most organizations classify the certification fee as a credentialing or board examination expense rather than course tuition, alongside licensure examinations and credential maintenance. Your organization's policies determine the final classification, and INBGC provides itemized documentation to support that determination.

This packet contains what your finance team needs to evaluate the request: the credential and its requirements, the standards behind it, how INBGC is governed, published fees with several funding structures, and answers to the questions administrators ask most. INBGC issues itemized invoices formatted to your purchase order or vendor onboarding requirements, and accepts payment split across two fiscal years where a budget cycle requires it.

If you have questions this packet does not answer, please reach us at support@inbgc.org. Employer funding inquiries are handled through Program Administration, and we will prepare any additional documentation your finance office requires.

With appreciation for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rita Suzanne". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rita" being more prominent than the last name "Suzanne".

Executive Director
Independent National Board for Grief Coaching
support@inbgc.org | inbgc.org

Section 2 — The Credential at a Glance

The Board Certified Grief Coach (BCGC) credential is awarded by the Independent National Board for Grief Coaching to practitioners who meet its published standard for non-clinical grief coaching.

Credential	Board Certified Grief Coach (BCGC)
Credentialing body	Independent National Board for Grief Coaching (INBGC)
Type	Examination-based board certification
Education	Grief-specific education from any outside provider, reviewed against six published topic areas. INBGC provides no foundational training.
Examination	Proctored Board Examination, administered remotely, 80 percent to pass across six equally weighted topic areas
Practice requirement	Minimum 25 verified practice hours with clients
Ethics	Agreement to the INBGC Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice, enforceable through a published process
Maintenance	Annual renewal, plus 30 hours of continuing education across a rolling three-year cycle
Verification	Confirmed by credential number through Program Administration, at no cost to the requester
Certification fee	\$3,750 for the Certification Path

What the certification fee covers

- Application and eligibility review
- Education review against the six topic areas
- One Practice Exam attempt with a topic-area breakdown
- The proctored Board Examination
- Verified practice hours review
- Credential issuance and the first year of certification

What it does not cover

Grief-specific education. Every candidate brings that from an outside provider of their choosing, and INBGC reviews it. That separation is what allows the board to review any provider on the same terms.

Who the credential is for

BCGC is for practitioners working in a coaching or otherwise non-clinical frame around grief. That includes coaches and facilitators, hospice and healthcare professionals, chaplains and clergy, funeral and death care professionals, social workers, and licensed clinicians who also coach. Licensure is not required, and licensed clinicians are welcome where the work in question is non-clinical.

Section 3 — What the Credential Verifies

Board certification is not a record of hours attended. It is a verification that a practitioner meets a published standard across four dimensions: education, verified practice, ethics, and examined competence.

The Board Examination - every candidate sits the same proctored Board Examination, regardless of where they trained. It covers six topic areas, equally weighted, with a passing standard of 80 percent.

1. Foundations of grief and loss Models and theory of grief across the full range of loss, including death and non-death losses such as divorce, illness, job loss, estrangement, and major life transitions.

2. The non-clinical grief coaching frame What grief coaching is and is not. The coaching relationship, presence, and witnessing within a non-clinical scope.

3. Grief coaching skills and techniques Practical, non-clinical methods and tools for working with clients in grief.

4. Scope of practice and referral The boundary between coaching and clinical care, recognizing risk, and when and how to refer to licensed support.

5. Ethics and professional conduct The INBGC Code of Ethics applied to real practice situations.

6. Diverse and disenfranchised grief Working across cultures and with losses that are marginalized, unacknowledged, or disenfranchised.

The passing standard is set by the Advisory Board through a criterion-referenced method, so it reflects competence rather than performance relative to other candidates.

Verified practice hours - every candidate documents a minimum of 25 verified practice hours with clients, through a signed attestation of their hours together with one supporting record. Supporting records include scheduling or booking documentation such as calendar exports or invoicing, a signed confirmation from a supervisor, employer, mentor, or colleague with direct knowledge of the work, or a professional reference letter.

INBGC does not require client session recordings, and no client participates at any point. This protects client confidentiality while still holding the credential to a

documented standard. For an organization, it also means no patient, resident, or client is drawn into a staff member's credentialing process.

Ethics and scope - every BCGC coach operates under the INBGC Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice, which defines what grief coaching is, what it is not, and when a coach is required to refer to a licensed professional. Agreement is a condition of certification. Compliance is affirmed annually. Concerns are reviewed confidentially, and outcomes include guidance, warning, probation, suspension, or revocation, subject to a published appeals process.

Scope is explicit. A Board Certified Grief Coach does not diagnose, prescribe, provide psychotherapy or clinical counseling, or treat complicated grief disorder or other clinical presentations. Grief coaching does not replace therapy or clinical care, and a qualified coach refers when a client's needs call for a licensed professional.

Maintenance - the credential is maintained, not permanent. It requires annual renewal, an annual ethics attestation, and 30 hours of continuing education across a rolling three-year cycle, of which a minimum of 6 hours must be in ethics, scope of practice, and risk and referral, and a minimum of 4 hours in grief across diverse and disenfranchised populations.

Section 4 — Governance and Independence

A credential is only as credible as the process behind it. INBGC's structure is built to keep three functions apart: setting the standard, applying it, and referring to it.

The Advisory Board sets the standard. It is a single board of experienced professionals across the disciplines grief work touches, including licensed clinical mental health, hospice and palliative care, chaplaincy and spiritual care, grief and bereavement, and coaching standards and ethics. It owns the topic areas and weightings, the scope of practice, the Code of Ethics, the continuing education requirements, and the passing standard. It does not review individual applications or decide whether any specific person is certified.

Program Administration applies the standard. Led by the Executive Director, it handles application intake, eligibility review, education review, examination administration, verified practice review, credentialing, renewals, records, and ethics enforcement. It does not define the rules it enforces.

That separation is the point. The board that owns the standard never touches a candidate file, and the office that reviews candidate files never writes the standard.

Training and certification are separate. INBGC provides no foundational grief coach training at any price. Candidates qualify with grief-specific education from any reputable provider, and Program Administration reviews it against the six topic areas. The organization that administers the examination has no financial stake in which program a candidate attended.

On accreditation, plainly. INBGC is not accredited by an outside body and is not pursuing outside accreditation. In an unregulated field the word is used loosely, and no single recognized accreditor governs the term for grief coaching credentials. Rather than borrow a word it has not earned, INBGC publishes the substance that accreditation is meant to verify: independent standards, a proctored examination with a published passing standard, verified practice, an enforceable Code of Ethics with a defined appeals process, and ongoing renewal and continuing education. Those are the things worth checking, and they are all published at inbgc.org.

Organization details. The Independent National Board for Grief Coaching is a registered Ohio trade name of Meridian Credentialing LLC, an Ohio limited liability company, located at 670 Meridian Way, Suite 284, Westerville, OH 43082.

Section 5 — Fees and Funding Options

All fees are published at inbgc.org/fees. There are no path-based surcharges and no fees tied to where a candidate trained.

Fee	Amount	Required
Certification Path	\$3,750	Yes, the route to the BCGC credential
Specialty Path	\$5,000	No, an alternative for candidates who also want a specialty endorsement
Practice Exam, additional attempts	\$125 each	No, one attempt included
Board Examination retake	\$375 per attempt	Only if a candidate does not pass
Annual renewal	\$495 per year	Yes, to maintain active certification

Most funding requests are for the Certification Path at \$3,750. The Specialty Path at \$5,000 includes everything in the Certification Path and adds specialty education in a defined area of practice plus a separate proctored Endorsement Examination. A certificant may also add a specialty after certification for \$1,250, reaching the same \$5,000 total.

Neither path includes foundational grief coach training. Every candidate on both brings that education from an outside provider.

Four ways to fund the credential

1. Employer pays INBGC in full. INBGC issues an itemized invoice to your billing contact, payable by card or invoice link. The candidate's account is never shared and no login is ever transferred. Candidacy opens once payment is received.

2. Employer splits payment across two fiscal years. Your organization pays half at enrollment and the balance within six months, with an itemized invoice for each. In practice this is often only a matter of weeks. An organization whose fiscal year closes June 30 can pay half in June against the current budget and half in July against the next, without either cycle absorbing the full amount. If the second payment is not completed, the candidate is responsible for the balance.

3. Candidate pays, employer reimburses. The candidate pays at enrollment and INBGC issues a paid, itemized receipt in their name for submission under your reimbursement policy. Where an organization reimburses across two fiscal periods, INBGC will issue a second letter confirming candidacy status and progress on request, so a second filing can be made in the next cycle.

4. Candidate pays over time. INBGC offers a payment plan billed directly, with no third party financing and no credit application: a down payment plus three monthly payments. The Certification Path plan totals \$3,900 and the Specialty Path plan totals \$5,200. See inbgc.org/funding for the full schedule.

Documentation INBGC provides

- Itemized invoices, formatted to your purchase order or vendor onboarding requirements
- Paid receipts for reimbursement filing
- Candidacy and progress confirmation letters
- This packet, as the program overview for your finance file

Requests go to support@inbgc.org.

Section 6 — What the Organization Gets

Capability you currently refer out. Grief reaches nearly every population an organization in healthcare, end of life care, faith communities, or counseling serves, and it extends well beyond bereavement into divorce, job loss, illness, estrangement, and major transition. A credentialed grief coach on staff lets an organization meet that need directly rather than referring it elsewhere, and does so within a defined non-clinical scope.

A credential that can be checked. Anyone can call themselves a grief coach. The title is unprotected and no training is required to claim it. A BCGC credential is different because it can be verified: families, clients, and referring professionals can confirm a coach's standing by credential number through Program Administration, at no cost, rather than taking a title at face value. For an organization, that converts a staff member's grief work from an informal role into a credential the organization can point to.

Defined scope, and a trained sense of its limits. Much of the risk in grief support comes from a well-meaning practitioner working past their competence. The BCGC standard is explicit about what grief coaching is not, and a full topic area of the Board Examination is devoted to scope of practice and referral, including recognizing presentations that require a licensed professional. A credentialed coach is trained to know where the line sits and what to do at it.

One standard for your referral relationships. Organizations that receive or make grief referrals face the same problem from the other side: no practical way to vet every training program. A published standard and independent verification give referral partners a single reference point. A credentialed coach on your staff is legible to the hospices, clinicians, funeral homes, and employers you work with.

Formalizing work already happening. For chaplains, hospice staff, nurses, social workers, and counselors who already sit with grieving people, the credential adds grief-specific structure and an accountable standard to work they are doing informally today. It does not compete with an existing license or role. It defines the non-clinical part of it.

What this is not. BCGC is not a degree, not a state license, and not authorization to provide clinical mental health services, diagnose, or prescribe. It does not replace therapy or clinical care. It is a professional board certification that verifies competence in non-clinical grief coaching.

Section 7 — Administrator FAQ

Is INBGC accredited? No, and INBGC does not claim to be, nor is it pursuing outside accreditation. Grief coaching is not a regulated profession, and no single recognized accreditor governs the term in this field. Rather than use a word it has not earned, INBGC publishes the substance accreditation is meant to verify: independent standards, a proctored examination with a published passing standard, verified practice hours, an enforceable Code of Ethics, and ongoing renewal and continuing education. All of it is published at inbgc.org and can be reviewed before you fund anything.

Is this a degree or a license? Neither. BCGC is a professional board certification. It does not authorize the holder to provide clinical mental health services, diagnose, or prescribe. It verifies competence in non-clinical grief coaching against a published standard.

Is the certification fee professional development or a credentialing expense? Most organizations classify it as a credentialing or board examination expense rather than course tuition, because it covers examination, eligibility review, education review, and credentialing rather than instruction. Final classification is determined by your organization's policies. INBGC provides itemized documentation to support that determination.

Does the fee include training? No. INBGC provides no foundational grief coach training at any price. Candidates bring grief-specific education from an outside provider of their choosing, and INBGC reviews it against six published topic areas. If your staff member has not yet completed that education, its cost sits outside this fee and outside INBGC entirely.

Can our organization pay INBGC directly? Yes. INBGC issues an itemized invoice to your billing contact, payable by card or invoice link. Email support@inbgc.org with the candidate's name, your billing contact, and any purchase order or vendor onboarding requirements. The candidate's account is never shared and no login is transferred at any point.

Can we split payment across two fiscal years? Yes. Your organization pays half at enrollment and the balance within six months, with an itemized invoice issued for each. If the second payment is not completed, the candidate is responsible for the balance.

What documentation can INBGC provide for our finance office? Itemized invoices formatted to your purchase order or vendor onboarding requirements, paid receipts for reimbursement filing, and candidacy and progress confirmation letters. This packet serves as the program overview. Custom documentation requests go to support@inbgc.org.

What is the time commitment for the staff member? It depends on where the candidate is starting. Those who already hold qualifying grief-specific education and can document their practice hours move fastest. Those closing a gap in one of the six topic areas take longer, since that education is completed through an outside provider. There is no cohort schedule and no enrollment deadline, and the Board Examination is administered remotely through a live proctoring platform whenever the candidate is ready.

What if the staff member leaves before completing certification? The candidacy belongs to the individual, not the organization. If your organization has paid in full, the candidacy continues and the individual completes it independently. If a second payment is outstanding under a split arrangement, the candidate becomes responsible for the balance. INBGC does not refund the certification fee once eligibility review has begun.

What if the staff member does not pass the examination? Every unsuccessful attempt produces a topic-area score report identifying where to focus. Retakes are \$375 per attempt, with a minimum 30 day wait between attempts and a maximum of three attempts within any 12 month period. Retake fees are not part of the original certification fee.

How is the credential verified? Every certificant is issued a credential number. Program Administration confirms standing to any employer, client, or referral partner who asks, at no cost and without involving the certificant, covering the person's name, whether the credential is active, and whether they are in good standing. Institutions that maintain credentialing files receive formal written verification on request from support@inbgc.org.

Does the credential expire? It is maintained rather than permanent. Certification renews annually at \$495, requires an annual ethics attestation, and requires 30 hours of continuing education across a rolling three-year cycle. A credential that is not renewed becomes inactive and the designation may not be used until reinstated.

Does the program qualify under our professional development or credentialing budget? That is determined by your organization's policies. What INBGC can tell you is what the expense is: an examination-based credential with eligibility review, education review, a proctored examination, verified practice review, published ethics, and ongoing renewal requirements. INBGC provides itemized documentation to support your finance team's classification.

Section 8 — Next Steps

1. Review. Everything in this packet is published at inbgc.org, including the full standards, the Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice, and the complete fee schedule. Nothing about the credential requires a conversation to see.

2. Choose a funding structure. Direct payment, split across two fiscal years, or reimbursement. Each is described in Section 5.

3. Request an invoice or documentation. Email support@inbgc.org with the candidate's name, your billing contact, and any purchase order or vendor onboarding requirements. Invoices are formatted to your specifications.

4. The candidate applies. The candidate creates their own account at inbgc.org and begins the Certification Path. Candidacy opens once payment is received.

5. Certification proceeds. Eligibility review, education review against the six topic areas, verified practice hours submission, the included Practice Exam, and the proctored Board Examination. Candidates who meet every requirement are awarded the BCGC credential.

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The Independent National Board for Grief Coaching is an independent credentialing board. It is not a training school, and it is not accredited by an outside body. Its standards, examination requirements, ethics, and fees are published in full at inbgc.org.