

LegitScript Addiction Treatment Certification

Primer

LegitScript

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About This Certification Program

In 2018, major search engines started suspending addiction treatment ads. Now, drug and alcohol addiction treatment providers in the US and Canada can get back their online advertising presence by getting LegitScript-certified.

LegitScript provides the only certification and monitoring service for drug and alcohol addiction treatment providers in the US and Canada that is relied on by **Google**, **Microsoft**, and **Meta** to vet advertisers for eligibility. For Canadian providers, this certification currently applies only to advertising on **Google**.

2018

April

LegitScript Addiction Treatment Certification is announced, in partnership with Google.

An advisory committee is created with leading industry partners to ensure continuous improvement and accountability of the program.

LegitScript starts processing a limited number of applications as part of initial rollout.

July

Google

Google begins accepting addiction treatment ads in the US.

Addiction Treatment Certification is required for in-person addiction treatment providers.

August

Meta

Facebook announces partnership with LegitScript in the US.

Addiction Treatment Certification is required for in-person addiction treatment providers.

Program gains support from **Cumberland Heights Foundation**.

2019

February

Microsoft

Microsoft announces partnership with LegitScript in the US.

Addiction Treatment Certification is required for in-person addiction treatment providers and mutual support groups.

2025

February

Google

Google begins accepting addiction treatment ads for providers in Canada.

Building out a program for addiction treatment certification was a natural extension of the work LegitScript has performed for years to make the rogue internet pharmacy problem — a driver of prescription drug abuse and other problems — significantly smaller. In the years since LegitScript has partnered with Google and Bing, the platforms have seen a 99.8% sustained reduction in rogue internet pharmacy advertisers.



Advisory Committee

The evolution of LegitScript's Addiction Treatment Certification program has been guided by collaboration and thoughtful consideration of industry expertise. Originally founded in 2019, the Addiction Treatment Certification Advisory Committee plays a key role in advancing the program's mission to promote ethical practices and support high-quality care.

This committee, composed of a diverse range of leaders within the addiction treatment field, offers valuable feedback on emerging challenges and opportunities. By incorporating these perspectives, LegitScript ensures its certification program remains responsive to the evolving needs of the industry. Through this collaboration, we continue to enhance Addiction Treatment Certification, fostering accountability and transparency to better connect those seeking care with trusted addiction treatment providers.

What entities are eligible for LegitScript's Addiction Treatment Certification?

Addiction treatment certification is currently only open to providers of drug and alcohol addiction treatment in the United States and Canada.

In-Person Addiction Treatment: Any website, application, or merchant that provides information about in-person drug or alcohol addiction treatment or facilitates in-person or online drug or alcohol treatment, other than at a private residence or non-clinical setting.

Mutual Support Groups: Any website, application, online forum, or merchant that does not offer treatment for drugs or alcohol, but that facilitates interactions between non-professional members engaged in recovery.

Crisis Hotlines: Any website, application, call center, chat feature, or telephone number that provides or purports to provide remote assistance or information to individuals who are in recovery or who are seeking information about addiction or addiction treatment, or to any person associated with such individuals, that does not identify particular treatment facilities or entities on the site itself.

For Canadian providers, this certification currently applies only to advertising on Google.

Benefits of Certification

LegitScript Certification helps ensure that providers of drug and alcohol addiction treatment can participate in online advertising on Google, Bing, and Meta.

Reduce Advertising Disruptions

Uncertified advertisers of addiction treatment services risk having their campaigns paused or suspended. By becoming LegitScript-certified, you can plan your Google, Bing, and Meta advertising campaigns with more confidence. LegitScript is the only independent certification organization that is recognized by Google, Bing, and Meta for this purpose.

Stand Out From the Crowd

Rising patient awareness and increased government intervention are helping to drive the growth of addiction treatment services. How will you stand out from the crowd? LegitScript's Addiction Treatment Certification helps you differentiate your services from both legitimate competitors and addiction treatment facilities involved in illicit activities. Being LegitScript-certified builds trust with your prospective patients by letting them know you operate safely and legally.

Work with a Trusted Partner

As the leader in healthcare-related certification, LegitScript has earned the trust of regulatory authorities and credit card companies, as well as major search engines and e-commerce platforms around the world, including Meta, Google, Bing, and Amazon. Our monthly newsletter and client resources help you stay abreast of trends in the industry and stay compliant.

Cost of Certification

Organizational pricing is on a per-facility basis and will depend on the number of unique facilities you have. If you are seeking certification for a government-affiliated domain, please contact us.

Generally, LegitScript considers the number of "unique facilities" to be the number of distinct locations you have that are providing addiction treatment services, even if under the same corporate registration.

Number of Unique Facilities	Application fee per unique facility*	Annual fee per unique facility
1 to 9	$1,595 USD	$3,095 USD
10 to 24	$1,495 USD	$2,775 USD
25 to 49	$1,395 USD	$2,550 USD
50 to 99	$1,175 USD	$2,350 USD
100 +	$1,075 USD	$2,125 USD

Individual Practitioners

Pricing below is for practices that have one to three practitioners and one website, and whose practitioners have no affiliation with a larger addiction treatment organization. Pricing is in $USD and applies to both the US and Canada.

Application Fee*	Annual Fee
$535 USD	$1070 USD

Expedited Processing

LegitScript offers an expedited processing service for applicants wanting to expedite the start of their application review. Generally, applications are processed in the order that they are received. Adding the Expedited Processing Service ensures that an application is added to the expedited queue. Note that this service does not shorten the length of the certification review, but will result in the certification review beginning sooner.

For further information and pricing, create an account at my.legitscript.com.

* The application fee is non-refundable.

Certification Standards

LegitScript has 18 standards for certification that fit into one of four categories: transparency, compliance, prior discipline, and business affiliations. Our process includes unique standards that showcase our expert analysis and help to identify problematic affiliations.

1. **Licensure & Business Registration**
   The applicant must be duly registered as a corporate entity or legal person (e.g., as a private limited company) in the jurisdiction where services are offered. Additionally, the applicant must be adequately licensed for the services they offer and in the jurisdictions they serve.

2. **Legal Compliance**
   The applicant must comply with all applicable laws. This includes, but is not limited to, local, state, and national laws and regulations, and all relevant licensing requirements for addiction treatment facilities and providers or other activities it is engaged in.

   The applicant must be in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations related to the prescribing or dispensing of medications. This includes any necessary licensing, registration, or authorizations required to prescribe or dispense controlled substances/drugs, as defined by the relevant jurisdiction(s).

3. **Domain Name Registration**
   The domain name registration information of the website must be accurate, and the domain name registrant must have a logical nexus to the applicant's business. This Standard may be met by making the domain name registration information public, acquiring and maintaining a valid EVSSL certificate, or providing LegitScript with adequate documentation showing non-privacy protected domain name registration information for your website. Documentation that satisfies this requirement may be a screenshot directly from the registrar displaying Whois registrant information. The applicant must also provide all domain names and websites under its control.

4. **Policies and Procedures**
   Upon request, the applicant must provide written policies and procedures demonstrating a commitment to best practices, effective recovery, and continuous operational improvement. The applicant must list the actual treatment or intervention services offered or recommended by the program (e.g., types of psychosocial therapies offered, whether medications are included in the treatment protocol if applicable, whether there are specialized services for specific populations such as adolescents).

5. **Facility Location**
   The applicant must provide documents proving ownership or such other lease agreement (or for MSGs, permission to use) for the physical location(s) where services are offered.

6. **Facility Disclosure**
   The applicant must disclose to LegitScript all physical properties and corporate entities under its control and/or to which it refers participants. Any such properties or entities that provide addiction treatment services must also adhere to these standards.

7. **Qualifications**
   The applicant must provide LegitScript with adequate documentation establishing that the applicant's clinical staff who offer substance use treatment have expertise and training in addiction treatment, including any additional certifications or licensure, as required by relevant regulatory authorities.

8. **Prior Discipline and History**
   The applicant must disclose any prior criminal, regulatory, or civil violations related to the applicant's businesses, facility(ies), or key staff. The applicant must also disclose any litigation commenced, resolved or otherwise addressed that involves the applicant at any time over the past ten years. Prior offenses or other bad acts, including any prior regulatory discipline may be a disqualifying factor, in LegitScript's sole discretion.

9. **Insurance**
   Where required by law, the applicant must maintain and provide proof of insurance to operate an addiction treatment facility or service. This may include commercial general liability coverage, as well as any specialized liability coverage, dependent on the nature of the business.

10. **Website Content**
    The applicant's website must conspicuously disclose the physical address of the facility/ies where services are rendered, and the specific nature of services provided. All photographs on the applicant's website must truthfully and accurately depict applicant's facilities. Website content must not misrepresent the scope or location of services provided by the applicant.

11. **Privacy**
    The applicant must comply with all provisions of applicable laws and regulations pertaining to protected information or protected health information, including privacy provisions. When required by law, the applicant must post its privacy policy on its website.

    For example, US-based applicants who collect, store, or transmit Protected Health Information (PHI) must be in compliance with all applicable HIPAA requirements.

12. **Medication Assisted Treatment**
    Any use or recommended use of pharmaceutical interactions shall be limited to drugs that are permissible by the appropriate regulatory authority, and may not rely on miracle cures or unapproved drugs.

13. **Co-ownership**
    Co-ownership of, or any formal or informal business affiliation with, lead generators (as defined in the certification application) is prohibited. This includes ownership of a lead generator by any persons in the applicant's organization with significant decision-making authority for the applicant. Informal business affiliation with a lead generator includes but is not limited to sponsoring or answering the

hotline for a lead generator. Upon submission of your application, any affiliation with a lead generator may be grounds for immediate denial.

14. **Advertising**
    Applicants and certified clients must advertise transparently. This includes clearly identifying themselves in their advertisements, and not using third-party business names in advertisements. Merchants must ensure advertisements accurately reflect the services available at a given location, and may not claim to operate in locations where they do not provide services.

    Applicants seen advertising on Google, Bing, or Meta without LegitScript certification or in apparent violation of the platform's terms of service may be considered to be attempting to circumvent the goals of the LegitScript certification program and its partners' goals. If such advertising is seen on either platform, it may be grounds for certification denial.

15. **Incentives**
    The applicant must disclose all incentives offered or provided to patients or clients. In general, applicants that offer incentives such as offering to pay for travel will not be eligible for approval. Other problematic incentives include, but are not limited to, paying for patients' rent or health insurance premiums while they are in treatment.

16. **Business Practices**
    None of the applicant's businesses may engage in practices or extend offers that may deceive or defraud patients or the public in any way, including but not limited to any material detail regarding the treatment facility.

    An applicant's business practices may not pose a reputational risk to LegitScript or the LegitScript Addiction Treatment Certification program.

17. **Affiliates & Partners**
    The applicant and any person or entity that exercises control over, or participates in, the business must not be affiliated with or control any other entity that violates these standards. Affiliates are any individual, business, or entity who previously, currently, or is expected to have a commercial and/or professional relationship with the applicant organization or its principals.

    A merchant's partners, defined as organizations essential to supporting the applicant's continuum of care, such as partner pharmacies responsible for the fulfillment of prescription medication to patients, are generally required to be LegitScript-certified or accredited by another recognized body, with limited exceptions permitted only at LegitScript's sole discretion.

18. **Transparency**
    Failure to provide full and accurate information as requested, in LegitScript's sole discretion, will result in denial. Applicants may undertake reasonable remedial action during the certification process without penalty.

Application Process

How to Apply

Applying for LegitScript Certification is easy and comprises five basic steps:

1. **Create an account.**
   Go to certification.legitscript.com to create an account and enter in your contact information. Once you've set up an account, you'll be ready to proceed.

2. **Start a new application and pay for your application review.**
   Before completing the questionnaire, you'll need to create an account and pay the fee for the application review. (Note that multiple certifications can be created and maintained under a single MyLegitScript account.) You will not need to pay the annual subscription fee until after you have been certified.

3. **Complete the questionnaire.**
   You can save your progress and return to the questionnaire at your convenience. See Required Information for more details.

4. **Clarify and remediate.**
   As our analysts review your application, they may reach out to you with questions or requests for additional information. They may also highlight areas of minor noncompliance that you'll need to remediate before receiving certification. By responding quickly to these requests, you can help streamline the review process.

5. **Pay your subscription fee.**
   Once your application has been approved, you'll need to pay the annual subscription fee to finalize the process and be fully certified.

Read How To Get Your LegitScript Addiction Treatment Certification for tips, resources, and more.

Application Questionnaire and Checklist

LegitScript certification is thorough in its review of your business, its staff, and its affiliations. We recommend you have ready the following information before beginning your questionnaire so that you can move quickly through the application. If you find yourself missing information, you'll be able to save your application and return to it when you are ready. Please note that not all of the items listed below may apply to you. The entire application questionnaire is available for your review: Addiction Treatment Certification Questionnaire

- Physical addresses of all facilities
- List of jurisdictions where you offer services
- Corporate registration information
- List of services and treatments provided
- DEA registration number
- Physician or medical provider licensure
- List of domain names
- Proof of general liability insurance
- List of principals and officers

Tips to Expedite Your Review

LegitScript has seen high demand for this program. The time it takes to complete a review depends on:

- The order in which an application has been received
- The complexity of the application
- Applicant responsiveness
- The sufficiency and transparency of the answers provided

Each application review is unique, so we are unable to give time estimates; however, these tips will help you complete your application quickly:

1. **Start as soon as possible.**
   Begin and complete the application as soon as you are able. Applications are reviewed in the order they have been received (except for those with the expedited service).

2. **Have your documents and information ready.**
   The Addiction Treatment Certification Application Checklist provides a helpful overview intended to help you prepare for completing the application questionnaire.

3. **Be thorough.**
   It is important to be thorough and transparent. This will avoid back-and-forth conversation between you and LegitScript's review analysts.

4. **Respond promptly.**
   If analysts need additional information or request remediation, respond promptly. We are unable to advance your application until all information is provided and necessary changes are made.

5. **Pay promptly.**
   The application and subscription fees must be paid to complete the certification process

Frequently Asked Questions

Qualifications

What entities qualify for LegitScript's Addiction Treatment Certification?

- In-Person Addiction Treatment: Any website, application, or merchant that provides information about in-person drug or alcohol addiction treatment or facilitates in-person or online drug or alcohol treatment, other than at a private residence or non-clinical setting.
- Mutual Support Groups: Any website, application, online forum, or merchant that does not offer treatment for drugs or alcohol, but that facilitates interactions between non-professional members engaged in recovery.
- Crisis Hotlines: Any website, application, call center, chat feature, or telephone number that provides or purports to provide remote assistance or information to individuals who are in recovery or who are seeking information about addiction or addiction treatment, or to any person associated with such individuals, that does not identify particular treatment facilities or entities on the site itself.
- For Canadian providers, this certification currently applies only to advertising on Google.

Are lead call generators or sober living homes allowed to advertise?

Lead generators and sober living homes (recovery residences) are currently ineligible for LegitScript's Addiction Treatment Provider Certification Program.

- Lead generator definition: Your website is not owned, operated, or commonly controlled by the entity that owns or operates the addiction treatment provider to which it refers internet users. You refer potential clients to third-party addiction treatment providers, irrespective of whether those addiction treatment providers independently meet LegitScript certification criteria.
- Sober living home definition: We define a sober living home as a facility that is not providing clinical services or addiction treatment, but that instead provides a cooperative living environment and is

typically located in a private residence or similar setting and is not part of a larger treatment program offered by an addiction treatment provider. We understand that there are legitimate recovery residences; in the future, we may grow the certification program to encompass recovery residences, but we don't have a timeline set for that.

Were any programs exempt or grandfathered in?

No programs were exempted or grandfathered into LegitScript Addiction Treatment Certification.

Why can't international providers get certified? Will this ever be an option?

At this point, our program is open only for providers of drug and alcohol addiction treatment services within the United States and Canada. Google allows advertising for addiction treatment services in the United States and Canada. Currently Microsoft Bing and Meta allow ads in the United States. For more information about these advertising policies, please contact Google, Bing, and Meta directly. In the event these advertising policies change, LegitScript will re-evaluate the reach of its certification services.

Under what conditions are providers required to have an on-site medical provider to run ads?

This is driven partly by state laws and regulations, and partly by the nature of the business. In general, we're typically looking for an applicant that is providing addiction treatment services to have either an on-site medical provider or, at the very least, someone who functionally is on-site (e.g., at a nearby facility and regularly in attendance). We do see this as a best practice in most cases, but there are some applicants (e.g., mutual support groups or crisis hotlines) for which this is usually inapplicable. Please contact us at legitscript.com/contact if you have more questions about this.

Application Process

Is there publicly available information explaining the criteria for certification?

This guide and the Addiction Treatment Certification page of our website give overall eligibility information for our certification program. Our Certification Standards, listed earlier in this guide, provide in-depth information about what information LegitScript researches and requires during the certification process.

Exactly how long does the certification process take?

The length of time it takes to complete a review depends on the order in which an application has been received, the complexity of the application, applicant responsiveness, and the sufficiency and transparency of the answers provided. Because each application review is unique, we are unable to give time estimates.

How can I inquire about the application I submitted?

If you have questions or concerns about an application you have already submitted, please contact us at certification@legitscript.com. Our customer success team responds to queries in the order they are received. We're happy to give general information, and also help answer questions about your supporting documentation; however, we are unable to give estimates regarding the timeline of your application's review.

How long does the certification last? What is the process for renewal?

Certification last for one year, and is renewed on an annual basis. Our streamlined renewal process will presents the opportunity to update any expired documentation pay annual certification fee.

What is the pricing structure for addiction treatment providers with multiple facilities?

There is separate pricing for each facility: certification is intended to be on a facility-by-facility basis, even if those facilities are under common ownership. However, we understand that some addiction treatment providers operate many related facilities, and in these cases we may be able to offer volume discounts for single corporate applicants with multiple facilities. See the Cost section of this guide.

What if I want to add a facility or a website after I've been certified?

Certified drug and alcohol addiction treatment providers may add websites or locations to their existing certification at any time during their certification period. The process for adding a website or location post-certification differs from the initial certification process, but is straightforward and easy to do. Please see this info sheet for more information.

Will the certification process change and evolve?

We're always open to ways we can streamline our processes, improve the quality of our assessments, and adapt our standards to better reflect the changing landscape of addiction treatment. It's for this reason we've formed an advisory committee to LegitScript to ensure the continuous improvement and accountability of this program.

Certified Websites

Is there ongoing monitoring of compliance with the certification standards?

LegitScript performs ongoing monitoring throughout an addiction treatment provider's certification period to ensure compliance.

Are certified websites required to use the LegitScript seal?

Certified addiction treatment providers are encouraged to display their custom LegitScript seal on their websites, but are not required to do so. The LegitScript seal uses custom code to display the date, which shows customers that you are current and active in your certification.

What happens when a website is reported through LegitScript's reporting function?

We take website reporting seriously and make reasonable attempts to investigate the veracity of the claims. To the extent that we feel a company needs to be reported to the appropriate authorities, we promptly do so. If you see a potentially problematic website, you may report it on our reporting page on our website.



About LegitScript

Since 2007, LegitScript has been making the internet and payment ecosystems safer and more transparent. We combine big data with a team of human experts skilled in merchant monitoring, internet monitoring, merchant certification, and high-risk products and services. The result? Unmatched accuracy and deep risk analysis that identifies which commercial entities play by the rules, and which do not. Our multidimensional view across the entire compliance ecosystem provides unique insights that keep businesses and governments at the forefront of emerging high-risk trends. That's why LegitScript is trusted by the world's largest search engines, internet platforms, payment companies, and regulatory agencies.

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