

## Goal 7.A.2 Recommendation: Distance Learning

Presented to ECAC, June 24, 2021

### Background

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, most industry sectors, including government and education, moved quickly toward use of online methods for providing services and getting work done. Many professional development providers adapted materials and offered instructor-led courses through online platforms.

Prior to the pandemic, OCFS policy under DCCS Distance Learning Policy Statement 15-5 only allowed for training hour credit for credit-bearing courses and approved asynchronous “distance learning” courses. Beginning in April 2020, non-credit bearing synchronous distance learning options were allowed through a separate approval process and on a time-limited basis, which is currently anticipated to end on September 30, 2021.

The demand for and availability of synchronous online training options ballooned in the last year. Over 1,600 courses submitted by training organizations have been approved to meet child care providers’ training needs. Though travel and other restrictions are slowly being lifted, the interest in and demand for synchronous online training options continues. A policy modification would be needed to allow licensed/registered child day care providers participating in these events to receive training credit toward their required 30 hours of training every two years. This policy change would also increase availability of viable training options for rural child care providers, since it would reduce the need to travel great distances to access in-person training, which is most frequently offered in locations with greater population density.

### Training Types

Numerous terms are used to describe types of training activities. Examples of terms associated with live online instructor-led offerings include online training, webinars, and virtual classroom. For purposes of revising the DCCS Distance Learning Policy Statement, we suggest that rather than defining a multitude of terms, events are categorized as outlined below.

- Training overall is categorized as either **synchronous** (learners participate in training at the same time) or **asynchronous** (learners participate in training at different times).
- **Distance learning** refers to any situation where instructors and learners participate in training/coaching from different locations. Depending on the specific type of training, distance learning can be synchronous or asynchronous.
- The table on the next page defines the terms for these types of learning and provides examples of each.

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### Distance Learning Types

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES	SYNCHRONOUS	ASYNCHRONOUS
<b>Online Learning</b>	Subset of distance learning; any training/coaching delivered via the internet (also referred to as web-based training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Child Development Associate (CDA) preparation training conducted weekly via Zoom</li> <li>• A training webinar on ACEs conducted via Microsoft Teams</li> <li>• An online conference conducted via Webex</li> <li>• A follow-up coaching session with a Pyramid Model master cadre trainer conducted via Zoom</li> <li>• A multipart training on child day care business practices conducted via Google Classroom</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>	
<b>Blended Learning</b>	Trainings that combine aspects of distance learning and in-person learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A First Aid/CPR/AED training, with the written course portion completed on a web-based platform and the skills competency completed in person in a classroom</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>	<p>✓</p>
<b>Hybrid Learning</b>	Trainings where instructors and learners participate at the same time, with some learners in the same location as the instructor and others participating via a web-based platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A half-day behavior management seminar conducted at a child care resource and referral agency (CCR&amp;R), with some participants attending in person and others via Webex</li> </ul>	<p>✓</p>	

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### Recommendations for Synchronous Distance Learning

It is recommended that OCFS also allow non-credit bearing synchronous distance/online learning offered by fee-based training organizations to satisfy training requirements for licensed/registered child day care providers and staff, provided the training meets event approval requirements similar to those for in-person training eligible to receive Educational Incentive Program (EIP) funding or to receive quality assured designation under Aspire.

All trainers must be either credentialed or one of the approved trainer types (see below) to be eligible to teach synchronous distance/online learning courses for OCFS regulatory training credit.

### Approved Trainer Types

TRAINER TYPE	DESCRIPTION
<b>Professional Development Specialist</b>	<p>Individuals who have successfully completed the New York Association for the Education of Young Children (NYAEYC) credentialing process and are approved to provide non-credit bearing training on general early childhood and/or school-age content have been awarded one of the three (3) New York State Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP) Credentials as a Professional Development Specialist (PDS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T-TAP PDS Early Childhood</li> <li>• T-TAP PDS School-Age</li> <li>• T-TAP PDS Early Childhood and School-Age</li> </ul>
<b>Content Specialist</b>	<p>Individuals who have successfully completed the NYAEYC credentialing process and are approved to provide non-credit bearing training in their area of expertise, , are awarded the Content Specialist credential.</p> <p>Examples of pre-determined areas of training that can be provided by a Content Specialist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and Social Services</li> <li>• Fine/Performing Arts</li> <li>• Health and Wellness</li> <li>• Program Organization, Leadership and Communications</li> <li>• Special Education and Related Services</li> <li>• Business and Finance</li> <li>• Safety and Security</li> <li>• Laws and Regulations</li> <li>• Technology</li> </ul>
<b>Verified Trainer</b>	<p>Individuals who hold an endorsement from the curriculum developer, submit all endorsements to the statewide workforce registry, and receive the trainer designation of Verified Trainer are approved to train ONLY the specific curricula for which they have successfully completed an official train-the-trainer (TOT) program. The New York Works for Children website (<a href="http://www.nyworksforchildren.org">www.nyworksforchildren.org</a>) provides a list of curricula for which an endorsement is required.</p>

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<b>TRAINER TYPE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>Higher Education Faculty</b>	Individuals who are employed by or retired from a nationally or regionally accredited higher education institution may be eligible to provide professional development on General Early Childhood and/or School-Age content outside the auspices of an accredited institution of higher education upon completion of the Aspire review process and receipt of the Higher Education Faculty trainer designation.
<b>Nationally Recognized Expert</b>	<p>Individuals who meet the criteria of a Nationally Recognized Expert (NRE) are those who have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attained acknowledged expertise in the Early Childhood field</li> <li>• Established national credibility to provide professional development to early childhood providers, directors, and trainers</li> <li>• Submitted (or the sponsoring training organization has submitted on their behalf) the NRE Application and completed the review process through EIP Event Approval prior to the training event</li> </ul> <p>NREs do not need to be entered into Aspire nor hold a NYS T-TAP Credential to provide professional development in their acknowledged field of expertise.</p> <p>Nationally recognized experts must meet one of these criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published in a field-related book or empirical journal</li> <li>• Delivered a keynote address at an international or national conference</li> </ul>
<b>Subject Matter Expert</b>	<p>Individuals who meet the criteria of a Subject Matter Expert (SME) are those who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have expertise in an early childhood-related content area</li> <li>• Do not hold one of the other EIP Approved Trainer because (s)he provides less than 10 hours of training per calendar year to early childhood providers</li> <li>• Submitted (or the sponsoring training organization has submitted on their behalf) the SME Application and completed the review process through EIP Event Approval prior to the training event</li> </ul> <p>The Subject Matter Expert must meet the criteria above and meet at least one of the following qualification requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a current professional license in the content area being delivered</li> <li>• Possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree in related field</li> <li>• Have been published in a field-related empirical journal</li> <li>• Have a minimum of 30 hours of experience training in the content area in the last five years</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the Subject Matter Expert, a Professional Development Specialist must be present for the entire duration of the session, and will be responsible for managing learning and ensuring that learning objectives are met.</p>

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<p><b>Coach</b></p>	<p>Coaching professionals must hold one of the approved coaching designations in the State of New York including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and Technical Assistance Professional (T-TAP) Coach           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The NYAEYC T-TAP Coach Designation is for individuals who have successfully completed the T-TAP Coach process including demonstration of education and experience eligibility, submission of a T-TAP Credential Coach Designation Portfolio, and participation in a T-TAP Credential Coach Designation Interview</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pyramid Model: Practice Based Coach and/or Pyramid Model: Leadership Team Coach           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Pyramid Coach Designation is for individuals who have successfully completed the Pyramid Model Coach training process and submitted all endorsements to the statewide workforce registry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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As with in-person learning, for the convenience of child care programs providing in-service training to staff, training credit may be offered for synchronous online training conducted by a non-Aspire approved instructor (i.e., the director, a qualified staff member, or another individual who meets the standard of sufficient knowledge of the topic being addressed). These professional development offerings would be limited to employees of the program only.

*This recommendation is respectfully submitted to the ECAC on June 24, 2021 by Patty Persell, NYS CCF, Diana Diaz & Amy Ludwig, NY Works for Children, Colleen O’Grady & Debbie McGuire, PDP, Jason Breslin, NYS SED Office of Early Learning, Kristin Kerr & Avril Mills, NYAEYC, Linda Darrah, OCFS, Abbe Hahn-Hook, ECLC, Shanaya John & Simone Hawkins, NYCDOHMH.*