



Office of Children and Family Services

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DIVISION OF CHILD CARE SERVICES POLICY STATEMENT

22-01

Distance Learning Policy

ID NUMBER: 22-01

TOPIC: Distance Learning Policy

MODALITIES IMPACTED: All Modalities

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS: Title 18 of the New York Code of Rules & Regulations §§: 414.14, 415.13 416.14, 417.14, 418-1.14, 418-2.14

CONTACT: Regional Offices
<http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/regionaloffices.asp>

EFFECTIVE: IMMEDIATELY

THIS POLICY STATEMENT IS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AND CANCELS ALL PREVIOUS MEMOS OR STATEMENTS ON THIS TOPIC.

Social Services Law Section 390-a requires all staff and volunteers to complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of training every two years including a minimum of five (5) hours annually. The Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) acknowledges that such individuals may wish to expand their opportunities for professional development by accessing distance learning activities. For this reason, OCFS will allow distance-learning activities to fulfill annual training requirements provided all other OCFS approval criteria are met.

"Distance learning" is an educational situation in which the instructor and students are separated by time, location, or both. Training can either be synchronous or asynchronous. Synchronous means that learners and instructors are participating in training at the same time, from different locations. Asynchronous means the learner completes the training without live instruction. Numerous terms are utilized to describe types of training options. Examples of distance learning are outlined in the table below.

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES
Virtual Learning	Synchronous training in which the instructor is live from a different location via media platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A training webinar on ACEs conducted via Microsoft Teams • A Child Development Associate (CDA) preparation training conducted weekly via Zoom • An online conference conducted via Webex • A multipart training on child day care business practices conducted via Google Classroom
Online Learning	Any training/ coaching delivered via the internet. Also referred to as web-based training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A learning course on Early Childhood Nutrition found on NYS Department of Health website • OCFS e-learnings found on Early Childhood Education and Training Program (ECETP) website at https://www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu • Self-paced, independent study course found on the internet, such as MAT renewal
Blended Learning	Trainings that combine aspects of distance learning and in-person learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • CDA course that requires self-study, instructor review of records and in-person assessment
Hybrid Learning	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"> • A half-day behavior management seminar conducted at a child care resource and referral agency (CCR&R), with some participants attending in person and others via Webex

Studies show that professional development using distance learning methodologies can result in equivalent test scores, job performance, attention, attitude, and learner satisfaction when compared to courses taught face-to-face. Given the increasing prevalence of technology and recognizing that many staff and volunteers have expanded their available work or volunteer hours to non-traditional timeframes, options for distance learning professional development activities need to be available for child care providers. Distance learning opportunities increase the

availability of training options for a wider population of providers and allow participants to engage in training that may have been inaccessible in person. Participants can choose a course based on their needs, learning style, and preferred pace. This creates equitable access to quality professional development for a diverse early childhood workforce. Distance learning courses are eligible to be reviewed for Educational Incentive Program (EIP) approval. Distance learning that meets OCFS approval criteria can be located and identified through the following:

Credit-bearing courses

Credit-bearing courses can be used to meet OCFS training requirements if they are offered by an accredited college/university and address the mandated training topics. The student must maintain proof of earned credits. In addition, the student must be able to produce the activity description (as provided by the college or university) and a syllabus to confirm the content. OCFS will consider 1 credit equivalent to 15 hours of training in the topic area(s) with the understanding that each person is still required to complete all the mandated topics. If you have questions regarding a credit-bearing course meeting OCFS training requirement, contact your regulator.

International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET)

Professional development received through an agency that has been recognized as an International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) approved organization can be used to meet the regulatory training requirements. For a listing of accredited providers, visit: <https://iacet.org/resources/accredited-providers-list/>.

Non-credit-Bearing courses

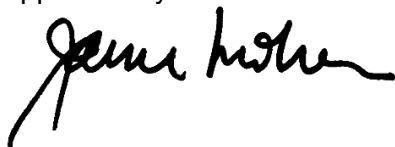
To receive training credit for a non-credit-bearing distance learning course, the training or organization must meet the criteria as established by OCFS. The trainee must maintain documentation verifying completion of the distance learning activity. Documentation must include, but is not limited to, participant's name, trainer/training organization name, date of course completion, length of training, and topic areas covered.

Asynchronous courses offered by an approved organization may be taken for training credit. Approved asynchronous distance learning courses and approved distance learning organizations are listed on the Professional Development Program website at: www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu/distance.aspx.

Training calendars, including approved distance learning non-credit-bearing activities, can be found at: www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu/findtraining.aspx and at: <https://nyworksforchildren.org/aspire/go/v7/trainings/search>.

It is recommended that staff and volunteers verify that distance learning activities of interest can be used toward meeting OCFS training requirements *before* enrolling in any distance learning activity.

Approved By:



Date: June 21, 2022

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Division of Child Care Services