Standards of Practice and Professionalism for State-Approved Training
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Washington’s Professional Development System

A professional development system is a comprehensive framework of professional preparation and ongoing learning support for early childhood and school-age professionals across a variety of roles, settings and sectors. Professional development encompasses the methods of higher education, relationship-based professional development and training.

State-approved training provides ongoing learning to support the mastery of core competencies, instructional strategies and concepts in child and youth development and program administration. State-approved training serves as one strategy for improving and sustaining quality practices in programs, and improving child and youth outcomes. We can meet these outcomes if the trainings that are developed and delivered in our state are consistently connected with the science of child and youth development, pedagogy and business management.

Purpose

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) state-approved trainer program informs the state’s ability to oversee high-quality knowledge and skill-building opportunities for early childhood educators, school-age professionals and program administrators.

This document will address different aspects of the program, including the:

- Process for becoming a state-approved trainer
- Standards for delivering state-approved training
- Quality assurance process for monitoring state-approved training
- Process for maintaining state-approved trainer status

Our goal is to ensure that all of our state-approved trainers meet the established standards of practice and professionalism so that we are consistently offering high-quality learning experiences for early childhood and school-age professionals.

Guiding Frameworks

The DCYF professional development system is built upon the guiding frameworks listed below. State-approved trainers must use these documents to make decisions regarding training development and delivery.

1. Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals
2. Core Competencies for Child and Youth Development Professionals
3. Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines
4. Relationship-based Professional Development Standards
5. State-Approved Trainer Competencies
6. Standards of Practice and Professionalism for State-approved Training
7. Reflective Group Learning – Standards of Practice
8. NAEYC Professional Code of Ethics
Trainer Competencies

Training quality depends on the knowledge, skills and professionalism of its trainers. Therefore, it is vital that each state-approved trainer meets the competencies and upholds the following assurances for practice and professionalism.

All state-approved trainers, regardless of trainer type and their method of delivery, must adhere to the quality standards and expectations set by DCYF. The Trainer Competencies focus on professionalism, facilitation, instructional design, assessment and anti-bias practices. Within these competencies are observable skills and dispositions that are necessary for trainers to provide effective adult learning experiences. The full Trainer Competencies can be found here.

Please note: The Trainer Competencies are currently undergoing a revision process. Updated Competencies will be distributed to state-approved trainers and incorporated into this document once they are finalized. Completion of this project is anticipated for the fall of 2020.

An abbreviated overview of the current Competencies is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethics and Professionalism</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The professional understands their field-specific code of ethics and is able to apply them in all situations, especially those that have a moral dimension, to decide what type of action would be most appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Able to describe the importance of ethics and professionalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shares information about ethics and professionalism and builds adult’s awareness on application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Applies field-specific code of ethics in their partnership with the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Models identifying ethical and professional strategies to support an adult navigating an ethical dilemma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Engages participant in expressing expectations for ethical and professional partnerships and relationships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Facilitates the development of norms and values related to respectful interactions, confidentiality and professionalism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creates a safe and welcoming environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates respect for individual/audience needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respects the diversity of the participant and demonstrates cultural sensitivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understands and adheres to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uses agency, client or colleague information appropriately and maintains confidentiality of participants’ self-disclosure (unless participants may cause harm to themselves or others).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainer utilizes effective communication skills to build on learner’s interests and provides an environment that encourages respectful, in-depth discussions on the content area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adheres to best practices for teaching adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delivers content that can be effectively transferred from the classroom to the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creates an appropriate physical, intellectual and emotional environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainer uses existing Washington Frameworks and knowledge of current research and best-practices to design a learning experience that is relevant and impactful to diverse learners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND PROFESSIONALISM FOR STATE-APPROVED TRAINING

- References Washington State Core Competencies and other guiding frameworks.
- Includes active learning experiences and both guided and independent practice in the design.
- Engages the participants and shares training goals.
- Provides clear and accurate instructions and demonstrations.
- Makes use of supporting materials – including technology – to enhance learning.
- Provides closure (sums up) when moving from one content area to the next.

Evaluation and Assessment

Trainer gathers relevant information to gauge existing knowledge of participants and uses assessments to ensure an individualized learning experience for all.

- Assesses the prior learning of participants before beginning the training.
- Checks for understanding throughout the delivery of the training (formative).
- Summarizes main concepts and reviews objectives at the conclusion of the session (summative).
- Uses appropriate methods for assessing training outcome.

Supporting Adult Learners

The professional must understand how adult learners grow and develop. This means they recognize that patterns of learning and development depend on the individual across all developmental domains, and create appropriately challenging learning experiences for adult learners.

- Able to describe that participants have unique learning needs.
- Recognizes that participants bring prior knowledge and experience to the learning partnership.
- Shares information about adult learning principles and builds participant’s awareness of their learning style.
- Applies adult learning principles to differentiate approaches for each participant.
- Identifies relevant strategies for each participant based on stage of development and readiness for change.
- Encourages the participant’s engagement and involvement in sharing their learning needs and determining how they are supported.
- Evaluates the transference of learning to practice and selects the most impactful approach.
- Develops an individualized approach based on the adult’s context and sharing of their own learning preferences.

The anti-bias standards listed below are from the Relationship-based Professional Development Standards; they have not yet been formally incorporated into the Trainer Competencies. Nevertheless, we expect all state-approved trainers to understand and apply these standards and competencies in their instructional design and facilitation.

Awareness of Self as a Cultural Being

Every person is a cultural being and a product of their experiences, values and biases. In order to build strong, respectful relationships, the professional needs to recognize how they contribute to a relationship so that they may develop culturally responsive practices.

- Identifies how own racial and cultural heritage affects definitions of normality, abnormality and the learning process, both personally and professionally.
- Takes action to increase awareness of how own cultural backgrounds, experiences, attitudes, values, beliefs and biases influence the power dynamics of interactions with others.
- Demonstrates increasing willingness to seek new knowledge and understanding regarding own cultural beliefs and practices.
- Identifies how one’s language(s) contributes to own identity.
- Acknowledges own privileges, status, attitudes, values, beliefs and feelings.
- Describes how self and others have been affected by individual, institutional and cultural racism either directly or indirectly.
- Engages in reflective activities with others to understand individual and institutional racism and its effect on self and others.
- Is open and willing to discuss differences that exist between self and others in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, identity, language and beliefs.
- Articulates own biases and their potential impact on relationships with others.
- Uses knowledge and understanding of how historical oppression, racism, discrimination and stereotyping affect them personally and in their work.
- Engages in and/or facilitates conversations about racism or bias in the context of their work.
- Actively addresses own implicit bias or racism as it occurs in the context of their work (e.g., processing derogatory comments made by individual during a session).

**Anti-Bias Practices**

*Professionals must recognize issues of power, status, privilege and the impact of microaggression, and use strategies that show respect for people’s cultures. Professionals have a responsibility to identify specific barriers to engagement and retention among the populations being served, take steps to reduce the harmful impact of racism and promote equity in access and opportunity.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Communicates in the participants’ preferred language(s) including language varieties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Seeks new knowledge about culturally and linguistically specific practices to develop a respectful learning experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Adjusts interactional style to be consistent with cultural and linguistic expectations for adult-adult communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Uses intentional language that demonstrates acceptance of races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, families, person-first terminology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Applies knowledge related to cognitive style preferences to adjust interactional dynamics (e.g., placing more attention on reflecting and processing than on content; being task oriented; adjusts approaches and pacing as necessary).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Seeks out educational, consultative and training experiences to improve effectiveness in working with diverse populations in order to dismantle racism and reduce harm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Analyzes and uses materials that demonstrate acceptance of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, families, languages and physical and development abilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Incorporates cultural traditions, history, funds of knowledge and language(s) to promote multicultural relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Maintains collaborative curiosity with a participant in recognizing and identifying their perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Reflects on feelings that emerge for the self and a learner throughout the partnership, and provides the opportunity to process them in an open and supportive way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Creates relationships in which partners take pride in their cultural identities, beliefs and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Seeks to find common ground to resolve cross-cultural differences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part I: Becoming a State-Approved Trainer

The trainer approval process was established to ensure trainer and training quality around the state. The Professional Development team within DCYF oversees the approval process and supports applicants through the process.

Applicants must create an account in DCYF’s Workforce Registry, the Managed Education and Registry Information Tool (MERIT), to access the state-approved trainer applications.

Selecting Your Trainer Type

There are several application options for trainer approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trainer Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Application Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Independent Trainer** | Independent individuals who provide training in specific content areas at various levels of the Core Competencies. | 1. Complete ‘Specialist Application’ in MERIT and upload resume.  
2. Submit education application to verify education in MERIT, including copies of official transcripts.  
3. Submit a letter of recommendation written on official letterhead and dated within the last six months to training@dcyf.wa.gov.  
4. DCYF assigns an observer and the applicant participates in the observation process.  
5. Once the observation is completed, the observation rubric is returned to DCYF.  
6. DCYF reviews all of the documentation and approves or denies the applicant based on the Core Competencies that were filled out and the feedback from the observation. |
| **Trainer Associated with an Organization with an Organization Trainer Mentor (OTM)** | Trainers associated with an organization to provide training in specific content areas at various levels of the Core Competencies. OTM is available to assist with trainer approval and provide ongoing observations and feedback. | 1. Complete ‘Specialist Application’ in MERIT.  
2. Submit education application to verify education in MERIT, including copies of official transcripts.  
3. OTM completes an observation for the applicant, returns the observation rubric to DCYF and provides a recommendation on the application status.  
4. DCYF reviews all of the documentation and approves or denies the applicant based on the Core Competencies that were filled out and the feedback from the observation. |
| **K-12/ESD/Head Start Trainer** | Current K-12 employee who provides training and education for teachers, high school teachers providing the Child Care Basics curriculum or employees who provides training and education for an Educational Service District (ESD) or the Office of Head Start. | 1. Completes ‘Higher Education’ or ‘K-12/ESD Trainer Application in MERIT.  
2. Submits Employment Verification form to training@dcyf.wa.gov (depending on employment role, a resume may be required).  
3. DCYF reviews the application and approves or denies an applicant based on the provided information. |
| **Higher Education Trainer** | Current higher education instructors who provide training and education through the higher education system. |  |
Complet ing the Trainer Application in MERIT

The state-approved trainer application has four sections. We recommend that applicants review all sections of the application and gather relevant information prior to beginning the application in MERIT.

1. Training Philosophy Statement
This section allows trainers to reflect on and formulate a brief description of their training philosophy. Through this statement, they can share more information about their approach to the development and delivery of adult learning, describe their areas of passion and share related information about their experience in early learning and content-related expertise. The training philosophy statement is visible to the public and is intended to give participants a better understanding of the trainer as a professional.

2. Professional Information
Applicants provide information that describes their professional experience facilitating learning for adults. This includes experience in both developing and facilitating adult learning. Examples of this may be working as a trainer, instructor, coach, mentor or other positions that are related to the professional growth of adults. All relevant skills and experiences will be considered, including those that are familial and volunteer-based.

Applicants are also asked to provide information about training delivery that asks for preferred training location, expertise in program type or audience and language fluency for training delivery.

Some or all of the following attachments may also be requested:
- Resume
- Letter of Interest or Intent
- Letter of Recommendation or personal/professional reference
- Employment Verification

3. Core Competency Demonstration
Applicants must submit documentation that demonstrates their ability to facilitate learning in the Washington State Core Competencies in which they are requesting approval to train. This section informs the level a trainer may be approved to train; training levels will be further discussed later in this document.

When completing this section, it is important to share your professional history (or relevant skills and experiences) in as much detail as possible to support evidence of expertise across the Core Competencies, knowledge of the early learning system knowledge, leadership abilities, understanding of adult learning theory, etc. Use this section as an opportunity to expand beyond the information available within the resume, specifically highlighting curricula developed, training history, conference presentations and other evidence of experience.

You may consider these prompts when completing the core competency demonstration:
- How has your work experience, training received and training you have delivered prepared you to facilitate adult learning?
- What accomplishments and activities show your level of knowledge in each competency area?
- What strategies do you use to individualize learning (i.e., support various learning styles) in group settings?
- How do you incorporate an anti-bias approach in learning environments with adults?
• What skills and abilities do you want the DCYF to know that may not be apparent from your resume?

4. **Observation (if required for your trainer application type)**
After all the documentation is received and reviewed, DCYF will arrange for a training observation as the final step to the application process. The training demonstration is an opportunity for the applicant to demonstrate their strength as a trainer and receive feedback on opportunities for growth. All observations are rooted in the Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals. The observation process will be culturally relevant, honoring varying communication styles and methods.

If you are uncertain that your observation training topic will meet the required criteria, you may get inspiration from The National Association for the Education of Young Children list of topics or you can email training@dcyf.wa.gov for additional guidance.

*The observation shows evidence of the applicant’s:*
- Content knowledge and adaptability with a live audience
- Ability to facilitate adult learning with multiple participants
- Areas of growth for the applicant as a trainer
- Adherence with the state’s guiding documents (listed above)

*Preparing for the observation:*
- Applicants are responsible for coordinating the training event as a stand-alone event with training participants. In-service (STARS) hours are not awarded for this approval step.
  - Co-teaching may occur if the applicant has the ability to partner with an existing state-approved trainer. In this situation, in-service (STARS) hours may be awarded for the portion the applicant delivers as long as they are under the direct supervision of the state-approved trainer. The state-approved trainer is required to uphold all standards of practice and professionalism for the training they provide for an approval observation.
- DCYF will send the applicant an observation packet that will include the trainer competencies, a description of the observation process and the observation rubric. We suggest that the applicant reviews these materials to be better prepared for the observation.
- DCYF-assigned observer will observe for a minimum of two hours in order to complete the Trainer Observation Rubric.

*Alternatives to the in-person observation*
A video or written submission review is conducted in lieu of an in-person training observation for individuals who are going through the state-approved trainer application process if there are extenuating circumstances, limited observer availability or language barriers that make it impossible for an in-person observation to occur.

A list of possible extenuating circumstances includes but is not limited to:
- Natural emergencies that disrupt everyday work environments/Pandemics/ State of emergencies
- Changes in applicant’s physical ability and needs due to illness
Applicants with extenuating circumstances may submit an alternate form of observation, including a video of a live training or a written training submission. The requirements for these submissions are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video Submission Requirements</th>
<th>Written Submission Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Training template includes earning outcomes and training agenda in training template</td>
<td>• Learning outcomes and training agenda in training template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Both the trainer(s) and audience</td>
<td>• All training materials (e.g., handouts, PowerPoint slides)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transition to and from breaks, if applicable</td>
<td>• Facilitation guide comprised of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visuals used (e.g., PowerPoint, chart paper, handouts, etc.)</td>
<td>- Written script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Trainer facilitation notes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strategies for engaging the audience</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Approaches for difficult questions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ideas for managing participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assigned Competency Levels**

The Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals and Core Competencies for Child and Youth Development Professionals define what professionals need to know and be able to do to provide quality services for children and youth, as well as their families.

The Core Competencies are organized in levels from one to five, starting with basic skills and building to an advanced level of preparation and experience.

| Level 1 | Sets the foundation for early care and education and includes the basic knowledge and skills expected of a professional in the early care and education field. Professional learning at this level raises awareness and includes opportunities for educators to recall information and explain ideas or concepts. |
| Level 2 | Educators at this level have acquired knowledge and skills comparable to a Washington State Early Childhood Education (ECE) Initial Certificate. Professional learning at this level encourages educators to apply information and use it in a new way. |
| Level 3 | Educators at this level have acquired knowledge and skills comparable to an associate’s degree. Professional learning at this level provides opportunities for educators to analyze ideas and be able to distinguish how to use different models or approaches. |
| Level 4 | Educators at this level have acquired knowledge and skills comparable to a bachelor’s degree. Professional learning at this level encourages educators to evaluate models and ideas or practice justifying a decision or stance. |
| Level 5 | Educators at this level have acquired knowledge and skills comparable to a master’s degree. Professional learning at this level provides opportunities for educators to create a new model, point of view or idea. |

Trainers are assigned competency levels for training delivery based on their application materials. Levels are assigned based on training delivery one level lower than their DCYF approved level of knowledge.
and skills demonstrated. Trainers are provided access in MERIT to offer training based on the levels assigned.

State-approved trainers who advance their knowledge and skills through the completion of a degree, may reach out to the Professional Development Team at training@dcyf.wa.gov to request a core competency re-evaluation. Next, the trainer would need to resubmit their state-approved trainer application in order to document a change in their assigned competency levels. DCYF is currently working on a process to make the adjustment in competency areas more streamlined; an updated process will be communicated once it is available.

**Part II: Delivering State-Approved Training**

**Events Eligible for In-Service Hours**

In-service hours are granted for professional learning events that apply adult learning principles to the process of developing new knowledge and actionable skills. These events have an aspect of information sharing and are intentionally designed to build skills through activities with practical application.

The following criteria applies in order for a professional learning event to be considered for in-service hours:

- Applies the trainer competencies for Washington State.
- Based on core competencies for early care and education or school-age professionals.
- Has clearly-defined learning objectives.
- Includes a prior knowledge assessment and check for understanding.
- Gives participants an opportunity to learn through active participation and collaborative activities.
- Allows participants to practice new skills within the context of individual differences and values, such as cultural perspectives and learning styles.

Many information-sharing events spread valuable information, but are not eligible for in-service hours because they are missing critical components outlined in this document. DCYF’s Professional Development Team reserves the right to make the final decision about the eligibility of an event to be in-service hours eligible.

**Modes of Delivery**

Trainers can choose from several types of delivery methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivery Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Paced Independent Learning</strong></td>
<td>▪ Online ▪ Email ▪ Mail</td>
<td>▪ Micro-credential ▪ Online content with: ▪ Written reflection ▪ Work samples ▪ Interviews with other educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Participant accesses content individually and completes on their own time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Access is open to any time and day and entirely independent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Activity does not occur at the same time with other participants</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Standards of Practice and Professionalism for State-Approved Training

| Blended Approach | Cohort Model | ▪ Assessment of learning that determines successful completion  
▪ Back and forth interaction with instructor required for in-service hours (i.e., instructor sends content, participant submits response, instructor reviews and mails certificate and feedback) |
|------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   |              | ▪ Cohorts with touch points within a shared range of time  
▪ Each person accesses content individually and completes activities on their own time within a window of time  
▪ Participants join in interactions in order to complete training |
|                   |              | ▪ Discussion boards  
▪ Chat rooms  
▪ Social Media group |
| Flipped Model     | Virtual or In-person | ▪ Content with follow up reflective practice/small groups  
▪ Each person accesses content individually and completes on their own time  
▪ Participants join a small group to reflect and discuss applying to practice |
|                   |              | ▪ Online modules  
▪ Documents/text review  
▪ Meeting in webinar or phone |
| Live Facilitation | Virtual or In-person | ▪ Event occurs at the same time with other participants  
▪ Live facilitation and interaction  
▪ Participants join at a set date and time in a shared space  
▪ Instructor leads through content and facilitates interactions |
|                   |              | ▪ Online webinar  
▪ Virtual meeting platforms  
▪ In-person delivery |

In-person trainings may be suspended in the case of an environmental emergency. Trainers are responsible for cancelling their training or adjusting the delivery method to a virtual platform. Changes in scheduling or delivery must be made in MERIT as soon as possible. DCYF recognizes that counties may vary in their response to an emergency. This may impact when a state-approved trainer resumes in-person training. Trainers are asked to respond to the Department of Health recommendations and follow all local health jurisdiction requirements for resuming in-person delivery.

**Entering Training in MERIT**

Trainers are responsible for entering training in MERIT to ensure participants have accurate record of the trainings they have completed. Trainers are expected to:

- Complete all fields of the training template in MERIT
- Enter trainings into MERIT three weeks prior to the start date of the training session
- Complete the training roster within 30 days of the training end-date
- Associate training with the organization listed in MERIT (independent trainers are exempt)
- Update MERIT to reflect training changes (e.g., different location and/or time, cancellation)
• Make every possible attempt to communicate training changes to registrants

DCYF does not conduct pre-approval of each training entered into MERIT.

**Aligning Training with the Core Competencies**

Trainers must understand and apply the Core Competencies and their levels as they develop, plan and deliver training to ensure that offerings align with professional learning expectations for providers in Washington State.

**Calculating In-Service Hours**

State-approved trainers are asked to indicate the session length and the number of hours spent in each of the content areas covered during the training. The total number of in-service hours a professional learning event is eligible for is calculated by:

\[
\text{In-service hours} = \text{Session length} - \text{Time for breaks}^* 
\]

Breaks are defined as periods more than 30 minutes during which no training content or activities take place. Longer trainings often provide participants with a lunch break. This break is subtracted from the overall in-service hours. Short breaks do not need to be subtracted and should be included in training to support learner’s needs. Trainers are encouraged to adjust their session length to ensure that participants are receiving the accurate number of in-service hours.

**Delivering DCYF-Developed Curricula**

All DCYF-developed curricula have a standardized training template in MERIT. In order to deliver DCYF-developed curricula, trainers must be assigned this template by DCYF. This ensures that participants receive a proper record of completion. For example, if a trainer is providing Electronic Attendance Training, the state-approved trainer must use the Electronic Attendance Training template for every training they deliver. If the template is not used, participants will not have their Electronic Attendance Training requirement recorded in MERIT.

Before a template is assigned, the state-approved trainer must be approved to deliver the training. Requirement to receive access to these templates includes:

- Approval for the correct competency area(s) and level(s)
- Completion of onboarding, which may include:
  - Train-the-trainer
  - Knowledge assessment
  - Observation of delivery

**State-Approved Training Evaluation Form**

State-approved trainers are responsible for distributing and collecting training evaluation forms to all participants after each completed state-approved training session. This evaluation gathers feedback from participants and provides the trainer with information on what worked and what changes may need to be considered for in future delivery. State-approved trainers are required to keep the evaluations for their records for a minimum of two years and must submit them to DCYF upon request. The training evaluation form can be found [here](#).
Unauthorized Topics

In accordance with the WAC, in-service hours will not be awarded for health and safety training that cover some specialized topics, including First Aid, Safe Sleep, CPR and Food Handling. Some training topics are not authorized to be delivered by any entity or state-approved trainer outside of DCYF, including:

- Safe sleep training
- Training on licensing regulations or WAC
- Licensing orientation for new providers

This list may change and will be updated as needed.

In addition, DCYF reserves the right to restrict delivery of select health and safety-related topics for in-service hours (including content on COVID-19 or other environmental events) to select professional development partners.

Disclaimer of Liability

State-approved trainings are intended to be informational resources for licensed early learning programs. State-approved trainers have no authority over such entities and cannot be held liable for the actions or inactions of such entities. Any entity that relies on the information and ideas identified in a state-approved training has the duty to verify the applicability, accuracy and timeliness of the content shared through state-approved trainings.

Part III: Monitoring Training Quality

By accepting the state-approved trainer role, an individual agrees to adhere to the standards of practice and professionalism described in this document. In order to ensure that trainers are delivering high-quality learning opportunities to early learning professionals, they will be subject to ongoing monitoring. Monitoring is a critical part of the quality assurance process that ensures that the state-approval process is producing a skilled trainer workforce that is meeting the learning needs of professionals throughout the state. This section will review the different types of monitoring processes that are in place for existing trainers.

State-Approved Trainer Observations

The trainer observation process has several important goals:

- Ensure delivery of high-quality training aligned with trainer and core competencies
- Provide trainers with meaningful feedback through observation or training review
- Inform DCYF’s professional development system needs

DCYF may request observations for any of the modes of training delivery. There are two different types of observations for existing trainers:

- Random selection
- Targeted selection (e.g., DCYF-mandated curricula, trainer concern)

Trainer observers use a standardized process to complete the observation. If your training is selected for observation, you will be contacted by DCYF with details about the process. Trainers can expect a two-
hour observation and possibly additional follow-up if the observer was unable to sit-in on the full length of the training or has additional questions.

**MERIT Training Data Review**

DCYF conducts periodic MERIT training data reviews to identify data-entry trends and to monitor trainer’s compliance with the standards of practice. This level of review considers:

- Completion of all fields of the training template in MERIT
  - Quality of three-part learning objectives
  - Alignment between learning objectives and the core competencies
  - Alignment between training descriptions and the agenda
- Entering trainings into MERIT three weeks prior to the start date of the training session
- Completing training roster within 30 days of the training end-date
- Associating training with the organization listed in MERIT (independent trainers are exempt)
- Updating MERIT to reflect training changes (e.g., different location and/or time, cancellation)

Trainers will be notified when their training is selected for review. They will receive data entry feedback at the discretion of DCYF.

**Quality Assurance**

The MERIT training data review may trigger DCYF to request additional information, such as training materials, completed assessments, copies of handouts and trainer evaluations. Upon completion of a training data review, DCYF reserves the right to remove any training from MERIT that did not meet the standards specified in this document. Should this occur, DCYF will communicate with the trainer about necessary steps to make their future trainings available in MERIT.

**Trainer Concerns**

Participants and other members of the professional development community may document concerns about a trainer or the content of training using the trainer concern form. This form is submitted to DCYF at training@dcf.wa.gov. DCYF reviews and follows-up on the concerns, which may include contacting the trainer and other parties involved. Additional information about the trainer concern policy can be found on the trainer concern form.

In the event that the concern is tied to an ongoing training or the trainer has future trainings scheduled, DCYF reserves the right to put a trainer’s status on hold, which would remove the trainer’s ability to provide additional training during the review period.

There may be circumstances where DCYF requires the trainer to complete a time-bound professional development plan as a result of any findings from a trainer concern.

**Trainer Sanctions**

If it is found that the trainer has violated state-approved trainer expectations, trainer sanctions may be enforced. The application of the steps below is not always sequential and DCYF reserves the right to begin at any step as deemed appropriate for the situation.

Possible sanctions include:

- Assigning professional development plan and demonstration of new behavior
• Conducting an on-site monitoring review and placement on probationary status
• Assigning work under the guidance of a state-approved trainer mentor
• Revoking access to training materials (Basecamp access) either temporarily (up to six months) or permanently
• Revoking access to DCYF-mandated curricula training templates (example Child Care Basics)
• Removing approved trainer status temporarily, up to one year

Examples of when trainer sanctions may apply include but are not limited to:
• A trainer does not abide by the expectations of state-approved trainers, as included in the trainer application and this document
• A trainer misleads a target audience with misinformation about their training (e.g., content, requirements met, cost, available support)
• A trainer keeps participants’ payments without providing the described service
• A trainer is convicted of a crime against a person or a crime that would disqualify you as a licensed provider
• A trainer does not follow rules of use for Basecamp

If a trainer is disqualified from providing child care or has their license revoked or denied, the trainer will not be allowed to be a state-approved trainer. Furthermore, if it is found that the trainer is participating in any misleading marketing, fraudulent or illegal activity, the immediate removal of trainer status may apply.

**Trainer Professional Development Plan**

Trainers are invited to develop and maintain an individualized Professional Development Plan (PDP). This is an opportunity for a trainer to use feedback from the observation process to be reflective and set goals for continuous growth.

**In-Service Training**

All trainers are expected to complete at least 15 hours of continuing education each year during their approval period. This could be done through training, conferences or college coursework. Trainers should focus on how to advance their skills as an adult educator and address their own interests and needs. Example topics include adult learning theory, leadership practices or facilitating learning within the context of relationships. Trainers may also benefit from gaining deeper knowledge in topic areas that they train in the most.

**Part IV: State-Approved Trainer Renewal**

All state-approved trainers will need to renew their trainer approval every three years to show that they are active within the professional development system. This will ensure that DCYF has an updated trainer roster and that trainers have an opportunity to receive updated policies and provide feedback to guide system development.

A trainer renewal application is being developed and will be available to all state-approved trainers in fall 2020. For the 2020 renewal, trainers will complete a renewal application by Dec. 31, 2020. They will need to:

• Complete a survey regarding DCYF trainer supports, policies and procedures
• Update their professional information in MERIT, including their affiliated organization, if any
• Review the Standards of Practice and Professionalism for State-approved Training

Moving forward, all trainers will need to renew their status every three years to show they’re active trainers by meeting the following:
• Facilitate at least one training annually
• Complete 15 in-service hours annually
• Resolve all trainer/training-related complaints
• Adhere to MERIT training data entry policies

Active trainer indicators will be phased-in throughout the next three-year cycle beginning in 2021. This timeline will support the development of new policies and procedures, as well as supports for trainers. Full implementation of all trainer renewal requirements expected by January 2024.

For more information about the state-approved trainer renewal process, please refer to the state-approved training page on the DCYF website.

**Suspending or Relinquishing Trainer Status**

Trainers may at any time suspend or relinquish their trainer status for any reason. If a trainer is no longer interested in being listed as a state-approved trainer in MERIT, email training@dcyf.wa.gov.
Definitions

Child Care Basics (CCB) Training. This 30-hour curriculum is designed to meet the initial basic training requirement for early learning program staff working in licensed or certified programs in Washington state. It serves as a broad introduction for professionals who are pursuing a career in the early care and education field and covers the state and federal health and safety topics for pre-service requirement in licensed care.

Conference Special Event Application. Allows organizations and trainers to submit an application to DCYF to have experts who are not state-approved trainers conduct training that earns in-service hours (STARS). All conference/special events align with WA Core Competencies and include a knowledge assessment and evaluation of training.

Core Competencies for Child and Youth Development Professionals. A set of professional core competencies developed for youth that align with Washington State Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals.

Core Competencies for Early Care and Education. Defines what early learning professionals need to know and be able to do to provide quality care and education for children and their families. They serve as the foundation for decisions and practices carried out by professionals in all early care and education settings and align with national standards for early childhood educators.

Early Learning Provider(s)/Provider(s). Includes all early learning professionals who may be Licensed Family Home (LFH), Licensed Child Care or Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) or programs delivery such as ECEAP.

Education Application. An electronic application available in MERIT to request verification of education information and recording of outcome in MERIT.

In-Service Hours. Training hours that meet the need for annual training requirements, delivered by a DCYF state-approved trainer or approved by the department to maintain staff standards and qualifications while employed as an early learning provider.

Managed Education and Registry Tool (MERIT). Washington State DCYF workforce registry, this includes professional records of individuals, provider background checks, training records, education information and qualification data.

Organization Trainer Mentor (OTM). The organization is a contractor to DCYF and provides an organization trainer mentor (OTM) who assists other staff in completing the trainer approval process. OTMs are committed to following the quality assurance process and expectations and provide mentoring and support to their organization trainer applicants.

Pre-Service Training. Training that is completed before someone is employed or soon after becoming employed. Pre-service is grounded in health and safety topics and does not count as in-service (does not earn STARS hours).

Relationship Based Professional Development (RBPD). An approach that uses professional relationships as a primary method to support professional growth and development for adult learners. Relationship-based professional development implements a reflective cycle of inquiry that uses an evidence-based
adult-learning process of goal setting, observation, assessment, action planning, reflection and feedback.

Relationship Based Professional Development (RBPD) Standards. These Standards identify the knowledge and skills that are necessary for relationship-based professionals to cultivate in order to best support adult learners in reaching their goals.

STARS Hours. See the definition for in-service hours.

State-Approved Trainer. A Trainer approved to offer in-service hours for DCYF. This is an assigned role in DCYF’s workforce registry for tracking and monitoring statewide training delivery. State-Approved Trainers may also have specific training privileges assigned to them by DCYF to deliver certain pre-service or in-service training requirements or other DCYF developed training.

Trainer Assurances. A set of expectations state-approved trainers agree and adhere to as part of being a state-approved trainer.

Trainer Competencies. The trainer competencies capture the knowledge and skills necessary for trainers to cultivate in order to provide impactful learning opportunities.

Trainer Observer. DCYF staff or contracted professionals who provide observations and individualized feedback to trainers through the observation and evaluation process used for quality assurance of state-approved trainers.

Trainer Observation Rubric. The tool used to evaluate the quality of in-person, online and self-paced/correspondence training as part of the trainer application and quality assurance processes.

Trainer Sanctions. A sanction is issued to a state-approved trainer if a state-approved trainer does not meet the Trainer Standards of Practice and Professionalism or engages in fraudulent/illicit activity.

Training Organization. Listed in MERIT as an organization who employs or contracts with state-approved trainers to provide professional learning opportunities for Washington’s early learning workforce. Trainers can associate with their organization when recording training in MERIT as a way to track all training provided by that organization delivered by multiple trainers.