

**DCF Academy for Workforce  
Knowledge and Development**

**Practice Guide to Policy 11-2  
June 2013**

**DCF ACADEMY FOR WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**Practice Guide**  
**To DCF Policy 11-2**

**Academy Role** In an effort to ensure consistency in staff development within DCF and across provider agencies, the Academy has been expanded to meet the unique training and learning needs of the Area Offices, facility staff and community providers. With this, the Academy has been reorganized to a Co-Director structure with one Director largely responsible for Area Office training and one Director primarily responsible for training for facility staff and the community.

**REGISTRATION AND ACCEPTANCE**

**Registration** Registration for the Academy Catalog courses shall be made by completing the DCF-101, "Registration Form."

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**Supervisor's Approval** The employee's supervisor must approve the registration for the training course.

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**Submission of the Registration Form** Registration forms should be faxed to the Academy at (860)550-6362.

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**Acceptance Criteria** Applicants shall be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.  
**Note:** The Academy may balance acceptance regionally for courses with more applicants than available spaces.

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**Notification of Acceptance** The Academy will inform applicants who have been accepted into a course.  
No employee shall plan to attend, or attend, a course without receiving a notification of acceptance.

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**Cancellation of Courses** The Academy reserves the right to cancel course offerings which do not meet minimum enrollment requirements.

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#### **TRAINING LOCATIONS**

The Academy has two training locations:

- Central Office- 505 Hudson St., Hartford CT ([see parking instructions](#))
- Southern Academy- 1 Long Wharf Drive, New Haven, CT (onsite parking available)

Training sessions can also be held at alternative training sites around the state as deemed necessary. The Academy supports both statewide training and localized training upon request.

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#### **ATTENDANCE**

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#### **Absences**

An excused absence from a mandatory training session shall be granted only in an emergency situation. An "emergency" means a crisis in the employee's family, or a situation involving the employee's workload which cannot be managed by other DCF staff and could result in danger to a child if the employee is does not attend to it.

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#### **Employee Responsibility**

In the case of an emergency, the employee shall:

- when there is a personal emergency that prevents attendance at a mandatory training session, contact his or her supervisor within 15 minutes of the start of the work day; or
  - Immediately notify his or her supervisor of any situation involving the employee's workload which cannot be managed by other DCF staff and request approval to postpone attendance at the mandatory session.
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**Supervisory Responsibility** The supervisor shall notify the Academy Registrar on the day of such absence via email.

The supervisor shall ensure that the time card reflect a non-training activity for the specified day.

The supervisor shall email the Academy Registrar prior to 9:00 a.m. and provide notification that the employee will not be in attendance.

In the event that the absence is part of a multi-day program, the supervisor shall confirm with the Academy whether the employee will be permitted to attend the subsequent days of the course.

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**Academy Responsibility** In the event any employee is absent from training and the Academy has not been informed of the absence by the supervisor by the end of the training day, the Academy Registrar shall send notification to the employee's supervisor.

**TARDINESS**

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**Tardiness** It is expected that all employees will demonstrate dependability by reporting to training and returning from breaks on time and completing the full training class.

Tardiness shall be excused in the event of an emergency.

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**Supervisor Responsibility** If, for any reason, an employee scheduled for training anticipates being tardy for an Academy-run or -sponsored class or course, he or she shall contact his or her supervisor prior to the beginning of the training session.

Supervisors shall contact the Academy prior to the beginning of training to report employees who:

- have called in, in anticipation of being tardy;
  - were excused from class because of an emergency; or
  - must leave before the close of the class.
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**Academy  
Responsibility**

The Academy shall:

- have employees sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of class and ensure that all in attendance have appropriately signed in;
- collect the attendance sheets;
- e-mail supervisors with the names of unauthorized tardy and absent employees;
- obtain employee feedback regarding the class via a training evaluation form, for the purpose of ensuring continuous improvement in the quality of the training; and
- retain copies of attendance sheets, evaluations and all other supporting documents of training.

The Academy reserves the right to:

- deny admission to an employee who is more than one hour late for a training; and
- ask an employee to return to his or her work site if behavior in the classroom is disruptive to the learning experience.

Employees who miss any portion of the training time may receive an “incomplete” status for the course. An employee who receives an “incomplete” status in a mandatory course must make up the missed training content.

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**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

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**Decision to  
Cancel  
Classes**

In the event of inclement weather on days when classes are scheduled at the Academy, a Director, or designee, shall decide if classes should be canceled.

A decision to cancel classes shall be made by 7:00 A.M. and shall be publicized on Channel 3, WFSB and shall be reflected in a recorded message on 860-560-5055.

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**Report to  
Work Site**

Unless state offices have been closed due to inclement weather, employees whose training classes have been cancelled shall report to their work sites at the regularly scheduled time.

**Careline**

Employees should not call the Careline to obtain cancellation information.

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**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Code of  
Conduct for  
Training  
Events**

Employee Responsibilities: Each DCF employee has responsibility for his or her professional growth and development and must:

- value and respect others without regard to ethnicity, color and race, language, customs, styles, values, beliefs, gender, sexual orientation and identity, age, education, socio-economic status, knowledge, skills, abilities, functions, practices, religions and geographic areas;
- be prepared, organized and on time for the training program;
- engage in collaborative learning activities with other participants;
- be a learning resource when his or her personal expertise or knowledge can contribute to the learning process;
- explore new ideas in classroom discussions through his or her active participation in all classroom activities;
- demonstrate respect through attentive listening to trainers, recognizing that they offer something of value to the employee's professional growth; and
- adhere to the DCF dress code guidelines when participating in training, unless otherwise noted.

Employees shall not:

- be late for class or returning from breaks and lunch;
- read newspapers, case record materials, books or any non-training materials during training hours;
- take part in any physical or verbal behavior that is offensive, intimidating or abusive to other participants or trainers;
- show or cause distraction to other participants by the use of cell phones, including emailing or text messaging;
- bring food or beverages into the computer training room;
- write letters or correspondence (work or non-work related) during the training program; or
- join in or initiate in any side conversations that might interfere with the learning needs of other training participants or with the trainer's presentation.

Failure to abide by this Code of Conduct shall result in the Academy sharing information with the employee's chain of command for the appropriate action. The employee may be asked to return to his or her worksite.

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**Emergency Contact** In the event of a personal or professional emergency of an employee who is in class, the employee's supervisor shall contact the Academy Registrar (or designee) who shall contact the employee immediately.

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**PRE-SUPERVISORY TRAINING**

**Supervisory Training Program** Newly-appointed supervisors in the Area Offices shall complete a Supervisory Training Program as soon as possible but no later than one year after appointment.

Worker assignment shall be at the discretion of the supervisor's chain of command.

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**Responsibility of the Area Office Program Manager** During the working test period, the Area Office Program Manager shall meet with the newly appointed supervisor to:

- discuss specific, required content areas of the training program;
- discuss other identified training issues; and
- ensure information acquired in training is applied to practice.

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**Content of Supervisory Training Program** The mandatory Supervisory Training Program shall include but not be limited to the following content areas:

- the supervisor as an administrator, educator and motivator;
- evaluating the quality of staff performance including decision-making, assessment procedures and case plans;
- developing performance appraisals;
- selecting training programs and assignments for staff;
- encouraging and rewarding effective staff behavior;
- using available research findings for decision-making, case planning and service provision;
- monitoring the provision of services to clients and case outcomes;
- negotiating with service providers;
- coordinating the provision of services;
- developing and maintaining case records and accurate LINK entries;
- cultural issues in supervision;
- planning and managing organizational change;
- individual, group and peer supervision;
- conflict management for supervisors; and
- transition in roles.

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**PRE-SERVICE FOR SOCIAL WORK STAFF**

**New or Former Social Work Staff**

New or former employees in, or employees transferred into social work staff positions in, the Area Offices, must complete pre-service training during their first 12 months in the new position.

Former employees with more than one year of separation from service must repeat the Pre-Service Training Program.

Former employees may be exempted from Connecticut-specific training programs with the written approval of their direct supervisors.

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**Content of Pre-Service Training**

Some examples of Pre-Service Trainings include:

- Intro to Child Protective Services;
  - The Case Planning Process;
  - Protective Capacities;
  - Engaging Families;
  - Sexual Abuse;
  - Trauma;
  - Values and Ethics;
  - Placement and Permanency;
  - Car Seat Installation/Safety Training;
  - Cultural Competency;
  - Legal Training;
  - Substance Abuse;
  - Domestic Violence; and
  - Behavioral Health.
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**Transfer of Learning** Supervisors of new and former employees shall utilize the “Transfer of Learning Guide” developed by the Academy staff to assess:

- the worker’s ability to apply what is being taught in the class; and
- further training needs.

If additional training cannot address the identified concerns, further steps may be warranted by the Area Office administration, *e.g.*, corrective counseling.

The Training Unit Supervisor and Academy staff shall work together to communicate trainee accomplishments and identify areas needing improvement.

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**Supervisory Meetings** The Academy and Regional Training Supervisory staff shall meet regularly as deemed necessary.

The purpose of such meetings shall be to:

- determine if Regional Office pre-service training is meeting the needs of staff;
- provide updates of training content and progress of employees;
- collaborate and coordinate programmatic and administrative training issues to ensure a uniform and consistent state-wide pre-service program; and
- troubleshoot administrative and programmatic problems that arise during training.

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**Area Office Supervisor Requests** Academy staff shall grant all requests by Area Office supervisors and managers for meetings and consultations as needed.

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**When Cases are to be Assigned During Training** Caseload assignment is determined by the employee's hire date. By the end of the first month, caseload assignment should be at a maximum of 25%. Caseload size should be increased by a maximum of 25% in the second, third and fourth months, resulting in a full caseload for the employee by the end of the fourth month.

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**Supervisor  
Responsibility**

During the working test period, the supervisor should:

- ensure that the employee is scheduled for training and is adequately supported and prepared to receive cases according to policy;
  - ensure that proper case coverage is provided to employees while in training;
  - evaluate the employee's ability to appropriately apply policy to practice and provide feedback as deemed appropriate;
  - determine if the employee is a good fit for employment;
  - document case assignments in LINK; and
  - ensure that new employees do not bear sole responsibility for cases during their training period and that proper coverage of caseload activity occurs while the employee is attending mandatory training.
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**Academy  
Responsibility**

During the working test period, the Academy should:

- offer training as deemed necessary and appropriate for case assignment;
  - provide written feedback to the Area Office regarding each employee's progress in training by the end of the third and eighth months of employment; and
  - provide feedback about an employee's progress upon request.
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**SOCIAL WORK CASE AIDES**

**Social Work  
Case Aide  
Training  
Program**

Social Work Case Aides shall attend appropriate classes within the pre-service training program for Social Workers.

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**IN-SERVICE TRAINING**

**Policy**

All staff must complete a minimum of five (5) days of training per year.

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**Supervisor Responsibility** Supervisors shall determine which classes are appropriate for employees to take based on the operational needs of DCF and the identified learning and development needs of the employee. In addition, supervisors shall ensure that each assigned staff has complied with mandatory training requirements and document this information in the employee's record.

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**Academy Responsibility** The Academy shall ensure that in-service programs for all staff are offered on a routine basis. A minimum of 10 in-service classes are offered each month.

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**Training by Functional Assignment** The Academy shall offer certification training by functional assignment or by major topic area as deemed necessary by DCF. Examples of such training programs include;

- Intake and Assessment Training (Differential Response System);
  - Permanency Training;
  - Adolescent Services Training;
  - Parole Services Training;
  - Engaging Fathers in Child Protective Services;
  - Trauma-Informed Practice; and
  - Suicide Prevention.
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**INTAKE WORKERS**

**Academy Media Center** Services provided by the Academy Media Center include but are not limited to:

- coordination and planning of all media support for DCF functions, meetings, and events;
- development of training videos when appropriate and as defined by project scope and timeline;
- oversight and maintenance of Academy and Media Center equipment; and
- collaboration with and consultation to other DCF divisions and units that are managing projects that require the use of the Media Center equipment.

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**Learning  
Management  
Services**

The Academy's Learning Management System (LMS) currently:

- captures all training data provided for DCF staff;
  - provides of data and reports to the Revenue Enhancement Division for reimbursement consideration;
  - provides data and ad hoc reports that are used to manage employee training initiatives; and
  - provides transcript data for employee upon request.
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**Continuing  
Education**

The Academy offers professional development programs to DCF employees to support continuing education efforts and other professional growth opportunities. These programs include but are not limited to: These programs may include but are not limited to: [Graduate Education Support \(GES\) Program](#), [Master of Social Work \(MSW\) Field Internship Program](#), [Post Masters Certification Program on Clinical Issues in Adoption](#), Continuing Education Credits and the [DCF Staff Mentoring Program](#).