

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Labor Standards (DLS)



Interim Guidance for
E-Learning Training Applications
Submitted Under
454 CMR 22.00
Deleading and Lead-safe Renovation Regulations

Under the current Regulation, Section 454 CMR 22.08(4)(a)5, there is a provision for Electronic learning (Online) Course approval.

The Department of Labor Standards (“DLS”) believes that there is currently an adequate availability of quality, live, classroom-based training conducted by authorized training providers in the Commonwealth to meet the industry need, and that online training, without strict controls, may erode the quality and purposes of required training to adult learners. Therefore, DLS has set forth this interim guidance document setting out general requirements for an online training course, and specific requirements for an online Lead-safe Renovator-supervisor refresher training course.

In developing the requirements listed in this guidance document, and also for inclusion in DLS’s proposed amendments to the Deleading and Lead-safe Renovation Regulations, 454 CMR 22.08(4)(a)5, for electronic learning and other alternate course delivery methods, DLS references the US-EPA’s Model Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule E-learning Course Component Implementation Requirements found at :

<http://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/documents/elearningimplementation.pdf>

By way of this document, DLS establishes the following criteria for the minimum threshold for DLS to consider in authorization of such training.

Training Provider Administrative Requirements

1. A training provider must offer a “live” (traditional classroom style) version of the training for which online authorization is being sought and continue to do so if authorization is granted.
2. When advertising and registering students for the course, training providers must clearly identify their online course is specifically applicable to and approved by the Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards.
3. For auditing purposes, DLS requires unrestricted access to the online course at any time that the course is being provided. Training Providers must provide to DLS a login and password so that DLS can review the online course and materials at any point in the authorization period.
4. As is the case for classroom-based annual refresher training courses, a training provider must submit to DLS the minimum information listed at 454 CMR 22.07(2)(f) through (p) as part of its application for approval for an online annual refresher training course.

5. Training providers must submit their instructors' credentials (including the credentials of those who develop and/or conduct the online training course) to DLS and provide updates of any subsequent changes in course instructors.
6. Training providers must have systems in place that authenticate the identity of the students taking the training and their eligibility to enroll in the course. Student authentication must be obtained by the student submitting personal and sensitive information to the training provider such as name, address, social security number, date of birth, license number, email address and/or special question and answer combination. That information may then be requested prior to beginning the online annual refresher training, and at intermittent, designated intervals during the training. DLS recommends that appropriate encryption technologies be employed to protect sensitive user information. Such systems will help to deter fraud, including the falsification of student identity.
7. A unique identifier must be assigned to each student for them to launch and relaunch the course.
8. The training provider must track each student's course log-ins, launches, progress, and completion, and maintain these records, in accordance with 454 CMR 22.08(4)(c)11.
9. Training providers must have systems in place that ensure students are focusing on the training material throughout the entire training period. For instance, online educational technology could provide a strong interactive component to ensure continued student focus through threaded discussion between students and the instructor and via interactive video clips, interactive camera (skype or similar).
10. Controls must be instituted to ensure that test screens cannot be saved, copied, or printed.
11. Training providers must have systems in place that reduce opportunities for document fraud.
12. Online refresher training courses must have adequate material to satisfy the minimum training hour requirements listed at 454 CMR 22.08(4)(f). Training providers must have systems in place that prevent students from prematurely skipping ahead. Students must be assigned a unique identifier that they will use to launch and relaunch a course. Students' actual time spent online, including applicable breaks, should be monitored and recorded, and these records retained and available to DLS upon request.
13. Training providers may break up the training over up to a two-week period so that the class meets together online at specific intervals (e.g., two-hour time intervals) to complete the training. Meeting at specific designated class times will allow the course instructor to interact with the students online in real time, as well as facilitate interaction between students via threaded discussion or a live chat option.
14. DLS must be notified automatically and electronically by the training course provider whenever a student completes such online training.
15. Training providers should have course instructors available to answer questions that students have while they are taking the online annual refresher training. This could be facilitated via online threaded discussion and message boards, or a live chat option. Another option would be to have a toll-free telephone number available during the training periods for students to call with questions for the course instructor regarding the course material.

16. Technical support—e.g., via a toll-free telephone number or live chat option—should be available to the students during the training periods to address any technical problems that arise, for instance, with their computers or with the online application. If a student is inadvertently logged out of an online session due to technical difficulties, the student should be given credit for the portion of the course already completed. At the same time, that student also should be required to make-up that portion of the training missed.
17. The Training Provider must maintain a database of those who have successfully completed the course.

Specific Online Course Requirements for Lead-safe Renovator-supervisor Refresher Training

18. The online training course must be specific to requirements of Massachusetts DLS *Deleading and Lead Safe Renovation Regulations*, 454 CMR 22.00.
19. Refresher training must include the key topics/aspects covered in the initial training for the particular discipline, discuss any changes in Federal, state, or local regulations, and discuss developments in state-of-the-art procedures.
20. DLS requires that training providers make it clear to potential students that the certification period for online Lead-safe Renovator-supervisor refresher training is valid for only three (3) years, whereas the certification period for a classroom-based training course that includes a hands-on training component is valid for five (5) years. Furthermore, at the end of the three year certification period after a person takes an online LSR refresher course, in order to maintain their LSR certification, the next training course **must** be taken at a traditional classroom based training that includes a hands-on component. DLS strongly recommends that Training Providers maintain a record of providing that information for each student by way of affirmation of acknowledgement.
21. Under no circumstances shall authorized training courses take less than the minimum number of training hours required.
22. The course must include at least 16 periodic knowledge checks over the entire course. The knowledge checks must be successfully completed before the student can go on to the next module.
23. Final test questions must be randomized from course to course so that the same test is not given repeatedly. An item bank (or a pool of questions used to vary the questions asked) must be used so that the same questions are not used repeatedly.
24. There must be a test of at least 20 questions at the end of the electronic learning portion of the course, of which 80% must be answered correctly by the student for successful completion of the electronic learning portion of the course. The test must be designed so that students do not receive feedback on their test answers until after they have completed and submitted the test.
25. DLS requires that students successfully completing online refresher training courses be provided with a printed certificate that contains an original signature, rather than a computer-generated signature, and specifically mentions that the course was taken online.
26. Training certificates issued to persons who successfully complete Lead-safe Renovator-supervisor refresher training via an electronic learning (online) or other alternative learning course delivery methods that does not include a hands-on training component shall include an expiration date set at three years (3) following the date on which the training was completed.

27. DLS requires training providers to issue course evaluations for their online courses to help determine the strengths and weaknesses of such courses and to promote continuous improvement.