**DDS Guidance on Virtual and In-Person Trainings**

**Introduction**

The following document is provided to offer overall guidance for all required trainings including but not limited to:

* CPR/First Aid training
* DDS certified Crisis Prevention Response and Restraint (CPRR) curricula/training
* Formal Fire Safety
* Basic Human Rights

The above list is not an exhaustive list of mandatory trainings. See [Provider mandatory training 2021](https://www.mass.gov/doc/dds-provider-mandatory-training-2021/download) for all required trainings.

Providers can also use this guidance when determining the best approach for other types of trainings or orientation processes.

Please contact the DDS regional director if you have specific questions not addressed in this guidance.

**Note:** The MAP Certification Training is moving away from an on-line only or in-person only training to requiring a blended course (on-line and in-person) to address challenges identified for both the on-line only and in-person only training. The use of the online MAP Certification course (knowledge portion) blended with a face-to-face (virtual or in-person) skills instruction for transcription and medication administration provides the best of both training modalities. A forthcoming MAP training guidance document will be distributed soon with details along with the compliance timeline to transition to this new training format.

**Guiding principle**

**Trainings can be offered in-person or remotely, either with virtual interactions or through online courses, depending on the subject matter (see below).**

Using this guiding principle, the provider should apply the below guidance and considerations to their training and their staff based on their individual circumstances.

**CPR/First Aid Training**

The provider should follow the training source’s requirements regarding in-person and online instruction. If in-person training is required by the training source, then please review, and make decisions based on the considerations below.

**DDS certified Crisis Prevention Response and Restraint (CPRR) curricula/training**

For CPRR, please follow the 7-14-20 guidance available at [CPRR Guidance document](https://www.mass.gov/doc/dds-guidance-regarding-cprr-training-during-covid-19-pandemic/download) and please contact [janet.george@mass.gov](mailto:janet.george@mass.gov) or [barbara.peebles@mass.gov](mailto:barbara.peebles@mass.gov) for more information or for questions specifically about restraint training. Follow the source’s requirements regarding in-person and online instruction.

It is expected that at least part of CPRR training of staff will be completed in-person, face to face, to assure that staff are able to practice techniques in a hands-on fashion.

For all in-person training of CPRR, please review and make decisions based on the considerations below.

**Formal Fire Safety**

The provider may complete Basic Fire Safety training using either in-person or online instruction, or a combination of both depending on provider and staff circumstances. Please review and make decisions based on the considerations below.

Formal Fire Safety Officer training (for designated provider staff) is available, and a schedule can be viewed through DDS Regional Training Calendars for DDS Fire Safety Training.

**Basic Human Rights**

The provider may complete Basic Human Rights training using either in-person or online instruction, or a combination of both, depending on provider and staff circumstances. Please review and make decisions based on the considerations below.

**Considerations for remote or in-person trainings**

1. Consider presenting lectures and other instruction virtually (via video conferencing or via recorded webinar/course format) whenever possible.
2. If there are components of the training that require an in-person interaction between the trainer and the student, consider limiting the amount of time spent and/or the number of individuals trained in an enclosed room. Best practice to minimize risks to health and safety of individuals, staff and trainers includes the following:
   * Trainers and staff should self-screen before coming to the training location. If upon self-screening the trainer or staff is experiencing any indications of illness, [symptoms](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) of COVID-19 infection , or fever or the trainer or staff has had close contact with someone with a COVID-19 infection in the prior 14 days, the trainer or staff should contact the provider to reschedule training.
   * At the training site, staff entering a classroom setting should be assessed for exposure to the COVID-19 virus. COVID-19 screening questions to be asked of all students, instructors or others who enter a classroom setting include but are not limited to:
     1. Are you or anyone in your household sick with a fever, newly developed respiratory illness, shortness of breath, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, abdominal pain, unexplained rash, fatigue, headache, new loss of smell/taste, new muscle aches, diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting?
     2. Have you had contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
     3. Have you or anyone in your household been directed to self-isolate or quarantine?
   * Masks are encouraged in non-DDS service settings (including corporate offices or training sites) for all trainers and staff and should be worn in DDS service settings by all trainers and staff, consistent with the [Commonwealth’s mask order](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements?n#mask-requirements-in-certain-locations-).

* Follow CDC guidelines related to testing (see [CDC COVID-19 testing guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/diagnostic-testing.html)).
  + A suitable room that allows social distancing is encouraged.
* Room ventilation is critical. Ventilation should be maximized, e.g., open windows or doors where possible.

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* + Training records should be kept as usual, but may be used in contact tracing, if necessary.
  + Time spent together should be minimized as much as possible.

1. When physical interventions/demonstrations of skills are taught, in addition to the above considerations, providers should consider the following for in-person demonstrations and practices:
   * Masks are encouraged in non-DDS service settings (including corporate offices or training sites) for all trainers and staff and should be worn in DDS service settings by all trainers and staff, consistent with the [Commonwealth’s mask order](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements?n#mask-requirements-in-certain-locations-).
   * Consider what the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), in addition to masks, is for the type of in-person demonstration/practice. Additional PPE may include gloves and protective attire (i.e., gowns, coveralls, face shields, etc.) for the duration of the in-person training, for the trainer and staff.
   * PPE must be disposed of in an appropriate manner.
   * Precautions must be taken with CPR breathing and Heimlich demonstrations and testing to assure that all equipment is sanitized between individuals and other infection control procedures (noted throughout this guidance) are taken.
   * Scheduled breaks should be taken to provide an opportunity for participants to wash their hands and access outdoor areas.
2. For online trainings, staff may require access to a computer. The provider may consider having the employee take the on-line course at their work site or at a provider location (office, computer lab) where the necessary equipment is available, and the staff can participate safely. In addition to the above considerations, planning for this type of training should include the following considerations:

* Training rooms should be disinfected between each user.
* Hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies should be readily available.
* Ventilation should be maximized, e.g., open windows or doors where possible.
* Masks are encouraged in non-DDS service settings (including corporate offices or training sites) for all trainers and staff and should be worn in DDS service settings by all trainers and staff, consistent with the [Commonwealth’s mask order](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements?n#mask-requirements-in-certain-locations-).