

 <b>VERMONT</b> DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>203</h1>
Chapter:	Supervision and Training	
Subject:	Training for Division Staff	Page 1 of 5
Approved:	Fredrick M. Ober, Division Director	Effective: 7/1/00 FINAL
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## Purpose

The division's training program will provide staff with the opportunity to achieve competent job performance and to enhance career growth, focusing on enhancement of knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes (feelings, values). An employee's training activities will be appropriate to his or her level of experience and individual needs.

### Core Training

Every new employee will complete the Early Service Training must be completed within six months of hire. The mandatory core curriculum for their job category must be completed within the first eighteen months of their employment, in the absence of approved waivers.

In addition, all new staff in district offices will attend pre-service training for foster and adoptive parents at the earliest opportunity.

### Ongoing Training Requirements

Each employee will participate in a minimum of thirty hours of training annually. For new employees, this requirement will be met primarily by attending core training.

### Workload/Caseload Assignment for New Employees

No worker will receive a full workload or standby duty during the first three weeks of employment. Workload assignment after that time is based upon the judgment of the employee's supervisor.

### Orientation

Each employee will receive a general orientation at his or her work site within the first two weeks of employment, coordinated by his or her supervisor. This orientation will be supplemented by job-specific orientation, the length varying with position. Topics will include, as appropriate:

- Orientation to state government services, including benefits, time reports, and other personnel matters;
- Meetings with local and central office staff, community agencies and networks with whom the unit frequently works;
- Familiarization with policy manuals, and how to consult them in hard copy and on line;
- Overview of Chapters 49 and 55 of Title 33 of Vermont Statute;
- Overview of the court system and the juvenile court process;
- Orientation to the division's computer system;
- Review of state Drug-Free Workplace policy and AHS Sexual Harassment policy.

Completion of orientation will be documented in the employee's supervisory file. The district will also notify HRD of the completion of orientation using the Staff Orientation Self-Assessment form (FS-610). When HRD received the FS-610, the new employee will be given five hours of training credit for the current year.

### Mentoring

The supervisor will discuss with a new employee whether he or she would benefit from a mentor as part of on the job training. Experienced division employees may also request a mentor. The mentor will ordinarily perform similar job duties in the same or another district. A mentor will be available for shadowing and consultation on a variety of issues. Mentoring relationships are arranged for a specific period of time between the parties involved and their supervisors. Service as a mentor is voluntary.

The district office or unit will notify HRD of the initiation of a mentoring relationship using the Mentoring form (FS-613).

### Waivers of Mandatory In-service

An employee may apply for a waiver of mandatory training requirement if he or she has:

- Successfully completed academic course work with similar learning objectives;
- Successfully completed a formal training activity with similar learning objectives within the last two years; or,
- Obtained his or her supervisor's recommendation based on a rating of job performance in areas specifically tied to the learning objective.

The employee's supervisor will review applications for waiver (FS-616) and forward approved applications to HRD for review. The operations manager has final authority on approval of waivers. HRD will notify the employee and his or her supervisor about the approval decision.

### Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Each employee and his or her supervisor together will develop an Individual Learning Plan (FS-611) annually. The ILP identifies knowledge, skills and attitudes needed or wanted by the employee to improve job performance or enhance career development. The ILP should include strategies for meeting these needs and wishes, including a list of mandatory training and optional trainings the employee will attend.

ILP's are due to HRD annually on February 15 or within sixty days of a new hire (effective immediately). ILP's may be revised during the year, if necessary, and forwarded to HRD as input to plans for training in the upcoming year.

If an employee wishes HRD to maintain a complete record of training attended, the employee should submit a record of non-FS training attended since submission of the previous ILP.

### Registrations for Training

Registrations for department-sponsored training (FS-618) should be sent to HRD. Usually, costs for these trainings are paid by HRD. Employees will be notified of their acceptance by HRD. Registrations for other training should be sent directly to the sponsor. Usually, the

district or unit pays costs.

#### Options for Completion of In-service Requirements

After mandatory requirements are met, employees may consider three options to meet part or all of their annual training requirements. These options must be related to the division's missions and outcomes. They may not substitute for attendance at workshops for two consecutive years.

- **Study Group:** a group of staff meeting together at defined intervals to learn more about a subject by discussing assigned readings and applications to practice (FS-614).
- **Special Projects:** a special project designed by the employee to address training or career development needs identified in the ILP. For example, a social worker whose plan includes learning more about mental health issues for children may propose to work with an abused children's support group at a mental health center under structured supervision. Supervision of a student intern may also qualify as a special project. (FS-615)
- **Consultantships:** an opportunity for employees with recognized knowledge and skill to serve as a consultant to the division. For example, a secretary with advanced computer skills may offer consultation to peers or a social worker skilled in TPR may offer to serve as a mentor to other workers. An employee may earn six hours training credit as a consultant or for delivering training to department employees, with a maximum of twelve hours per year (FS 612).

The employee's supervisor must approve any proposal for one of these options. To receive training credit, the employee will submit a final report on the project to his or her supervisor and HRD, including information about how the project enhanced the knowledge and skills of the employee.

**Credit for Training**

HRD will provide certificates to all participants who complete department-sponsored training. Continuing Education credits and endorsement of training by professional organizations will be offered whenever possible.

HRD will notify supervisors every six months of remaining mandatory training requirements. In addition, HRD will send a report of training attended by January 15 of each year to each district and unit.

Training records will be expunged from HRD's active records one year after an employee ends employment, and kept in an historical file for an additional year.

**Appendix—Definition of In-service**In-service is:

- Department or district/unit-sponsored training
- Job-related college courses
- Outside workshops with a formal program and targeted competencies
- Department sponsored individual self-instructional learning
- Plenary sessions, workshops and keynotes at conferences (attach agenda to In-service Report)
- Approved study groups
- Approved special projects
- Consultantships/mentorships

In-service is not:

- Presenting community education
- Attending meetings
- Reading books or articles, unless evaluated for learning objectives or part of an approved plan
- Team building activities
- Portions of conferences not spent in training-related activities (registration, resource fairs, award presentations, etc.)