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WORKFORCE
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TO: Adult Education Consortia Partners

FROM: Gina DelSanto, Ph.D. GDS
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DATE: March 28, 2012

SUBJECT: DWD Policy 2011-12
Distance Education

Purpose
This policy provides the general requirements for local delivery of distance education.

Rescission
None

Content
The Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Division of Adult Education supports distance learning as part of its commitment to increase participation in and access to adult education (AE) remedial services. Moreover, the integration of technologies in distance education supports student development of fundamental computer and technology skills needed to thrive in a complex and rapidly changing technological society.

Defining Distance Education
The United States Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) defines distance education for AE programs in the *National Reporting System (NRS) Implementation Guidelines, March 2010* (Implementation Guidelines) as follows:

> *Distance Education*--Formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software.

Measuring Instructional Hours for Learners in Distance Education

There are two types of contact hours for distance education: direct contact and proxy contact. Direct contact hours for distance education can be a combination of actual contact and contact through telephone, DVDs, teleconference or online communication, where student and program staff can interact and through which learner identity is verifiable. Students must have at least twelve (12) direct contact hours for official enrolment in an AE program. These direct contact hours may include both orientation and instructional hours.

Proxy contact hours are the hours students spend on distance learning activities. These hours may be calculated using one of three models:

1. *Clock-Time Model*, which assigns contact hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to, or engaged in, an online or stand alone software program that tracks time.
2. *Teacher-Verification Model*, which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on teacher determination of the extent to which a learner engaged in, or completed, the assignment.
3. *Learner-Mastery Model*, which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the learner passing a test on the content of each lesson. Learners work with the curriculum and materials and when they feel they have mastered the material, take the test. A passing score earns the credit hours attached to the material.

AE providers must be able to provide documentation of proxy contact hours upon request. Some examples of acceptable documentation include software generated reports, screen shots, or teacher logs.

Approved Distance Education Curricula

The Senior Director of Adult Education has approved the following distance learning curricula for use: ITTS, Plato, WIN, NovaNET, GEDonline, SkillsTutor, and A^{+}dvancer. Any other tools must be submitted to the Senior Director for approval before use.

Instructional Delivery Model

There are three instructional delivery models using distance learning curricula: distance education, hybrid, and face-to-face or on-site contact. DWD encourages the use of a hybrid instructional approach that combines distance learning with some degree of on-site interaction.

Pre- and post-testing must be conducted on-site. Students enrolled in distance education must be administered a proctored pre-test and post-test after the same amount of instructional time as other students. For additional assessment guidance, see Indiana's Assessment Policy for Adult Education Programs.

Other on-site contact may be necessary to deliver supplementary support for the student, to assign work, or to set timelines for the completion of assignments.

Materials and Technology Access

Students may access materials for distance education in traditional print forms (e.g., workbooks or take-home instructional packets), via television broadcasts or DVDs, or through online access. Providers should assess the types of materials that meet the needs of the student population they serve.

For those students with limited technology access, providers may consider issuing an instructional packet to be completed by the student in a prearranged time. Completed packets are then returned to the teacher in-person or through an established delivery system. Proxy hours can be calculated using either the teacher-verification or the learner-mastery model.

AE InTERS Reporting Requirements

For distance education students, the sum of proxy and direct contact hours must be entered in AE InTERS as total attendance hours. Selecting the "Distance" option designates the hours as distance education. For purposes of NRS reporting, states must classify the student as either a distance education student or a traditional learner. As such, DWD will classify students as distance education students if 51% of their instruction occurs via distance learning. This is subject to change based on future NRS and/or OVAE guidance.

Effective Date
Immediately

Ending Date
Upon Rescission

Ownership
Division of Adult Education
Indiana Department of Workforce Development
10 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Action
Indiana's adult education system will follow the guidance contained in this policy.