

Bureau of ABLE Policy

Subject: **Distance Learning**
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POLICY STATEMENT

Agencies that offer distance learning as a provider agency or as a referral agency must follow prescribed procedures and practices. These services are offered under the leadership of the Bureau-funded Distance Learning Project (DLP).

PURPOSE

In order to increase options for adult learners, agencies may choose to expand their methods of delivery to include distance learning. The Bureau encourages more widespread access to distance learning instruction.

GUIDANCE

Definitions

- Distance learning - formal learning activity in which the instructional activities of learners and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both.
- Provider agency - delivers distance learning instruction directly to appropriate learners.
- Referral agency - refers appropriate learners to the Centralized Distance Learning Services (CDLS) for distance learning instruction. (Agencies may also request permission from the Bureau to refer distance learners to an ABLE-funded provider agency.)
- Provider and referral agency - both deliver distance learning instruction directly and refer appropriate learners to the CDLS.
- Distance learners - adults who participate in distance learning instruction and have a minimum of 12 total instructional hours. Learners may participate in distance learning instruction exclusively or distance and face-to-face instruction concurrently. (See blended learners.)
- Blended learners - adults who participate in face-to-face and distance learning concurrently.

Agency Requirements - To encourage statewide access to distance learning instruction, Bureau-funded agencies may offer distance learning instruction under the leadership of the DLP in one of the following capacities: Provider agency; Referral agency; or Provider and Referral agency.

Distance learning agencies, both provider and referral, must comply with the following:

New Agencies and Staff

- Participate in the DLP's Distance Learning Overview workshop.

All Agencies and Staff

- Work under the leadership of the Distance Learning Project as part of the DLP network.
- Participate in ongoing DLP professional development activities as directed by the DLP and Bureau.
- Follow Bureau-approved guidelines for instruction.
- Administer Bureau approved pre- and post- assessments in person according to *Bureau Policy: D.100 Adult Learner Assessment*.
- Record student data in e-Data v2 as described in the *e-Data v2 Instruction Manual* and reporting instructional hours as described below.
- Complete the *Distance Learning Supplemental Instruction Activities Form*, if applicable. (See *e-Data v2 Instruction Manual*.)
- Maintain a copy of the *Distance Learning Supplemental Instruction Activities Form* in the distance learner's file as appropriate.
- Provide requested information to DLP including completing surveys disseminated by the DLP.

Instruction - Distance instruction uses distance learning approved curricula and can also include supplemental instruction activities that support distance learning approved curricula. Distance instruction is delivered using instructional media, including Internet resources, web-based programs, computer software, audio recordings, videos, broadcasts, and print.

- Distance learning approved curricula - curricula identified by the Bureau and disseminated by the DLP that meet time reporting requirements.
- Supplemental instruction activities - activities identified by the teacher or lessons created by the teacher to support distance learning approved curricula and address the individual needs and goals of learners.

Reporting and Documentation – Data entry procedures differ between face-to-face and distance learning activities. DL agencies record student data in e-Data v2 as described in the *e-Data v2 Instruction Manual*.

Distance Instruction Time - Instruction time in DL is defined in one of two ways:

- Actual Instructional Hours: time that a student spends on distance learning approved curricula using instructional software that records actual time.
- Proxy Instructional Hours: time that a student spends on activities for which actual hours are not recorded. Proxy hours are a fixed amount of time that can be reported based upon teacher determination of the average time a learner would work to complete an assignment. This can include:
 - Distance learning approved curricula for which proxy time has been determined.
 - Supplemental distance learning activities. Proxy time is assigned in accordance with the guidelines in this policy and with the assistance of the DLP. Reporting of proxy hours based on teacher-identified activities requires documentation using the *Distance Learning Supplemental Instruction Activities Form*.

Distance instructional time, both proxy and actual time on task, is recorded in e-Data v2 as distance learning hours following instructions provided in the *e-Data v2 Instruction Manual*. The *Distance Learning Supplemental Instruction Activities Form* used to document hours reported

for teacher-identified and developed instructional materials is completed for distance learners as appropriate and maintained in the learner's file.

Note: Face-to-face instruction for distance learners is entered in e-Data v2 as face-to-face hours following instructions provided in the *e-Data v2 Instruction Manual*.

DL Hours - Distance learning hours include:

- Face to Face - Actual face-to-face contact between program staff and learners. This includes intake, orientation, assessment, goal-setting, as well as face-to-face instruction that a learner may participate in such as tutoring, classes, or small groups. These hours are entered in e-Data v2 as face-to-face hours.
- Distance instruction – Learner participation in distance learning approved and supplemental instruction activities. These hours are entered in e-Data v2 as distance learning hours.
- Contact – Interaction between program staff and learners by telephone, video, teleconference, or online communication where the learner identity is verifiable. These hours are recorded using the *Distance Learning Supplemental Instruction Activities Form* and entered in e-Data v2 as distance learning hours.