

Minimum Standards for HIV Counselors, Trainers and Early Intervention Consultants

The following consists of prerequisites, training requisites, post-requisites and monitoring requisites for HIV/AIDS Counselors, HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers and Early Intervention Consultants. These requirements will apply to all Department staff who perform HIV counseling and testing for clients, training for HIV counselors and training for HIV trainers. This policy applies to Department of Health staff, contracted providers, and volunteers.

Objectives

1. Quality HIV counseling and testing services are necessary to prevent the spread of HIV; new infections and re-infections.
2. Every county health department and contract provider client will receive quality HIV counseling, testing and, if appropriate, referral to other care providers and partner counseling and referral services.
3. Every participant attending a Department of Health sponsored course (i.e., HIV/AIDS 501 Client-Centered Counseling and Testing, Partner Counseling and Referral) will receive current Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approved information and the same core elements, as specified in the course materials, regardless of where the course was given or the instructor.

Guiding Principles

1. Staff will not perform HIV counseling and testing services without successfully completing the HIV/AIDS 501 Client-Centered Counseling and Testing, Partner Counseling and Referral Services course, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 course manual.
2. Staff will be able to meet standards outlined in these guidelines through training provided by the Department.
3. Staff will be evaluated through performance appraisals as to whether these minimum standards have been met.
4. Supervisors, or their designees, will evaluate employees based on these minimum standards.
5. Counselors will be monitored periodically post-training.

6. Training will be adequate, available and locally coordinated, depending on needs and resources.
7. Counselors will receive, at minimum, annual update training, using the Department of Health approved 501 update curriculum.
8. Trainers for HIV counseling and testing staff will be expected to uphold these standards and will be monitored.
9. HIV counseling and testing training taken in other states is not transferable.
10. HIV/AIDS 501 trainers and Early Intervention Consultants will perform at least 32 hours of HIV counseling and testing annually.
11. Early Intervention Consultants will evaluate, using a standardized tool, training performance of HIV/AIDS 501 trainers.
12. Early Intervention Consultants will be available to provide training and technical assistance on programmatic issues for HIV counseling and testing.

Administrative Functions

Staff for whom HIV counseling and testing is a primary area of responsibility will be given priority for training. Others will be scheduled for training as space is available.

Community-based providers registered with the Department of Health through a contract or memorandum of agreement to provide HIV counseling and testing will not be charged for pre-requisite or requisite training.

HIV counseling and testing staff, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 manual, who successfully complete the HIV/AIDS 501 course will receive a certificate of successful completion, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 manual. HIV/AIDS 501 trainers reserve the right to deny certificates to those staff who do not successfully complete pre-requisite or requisite materials and activities.

HIV Counseling and Testing Staff

Staff who perform HIV counseling and testing activities within county health departments will be held to the following minimum standards.

Pre-requisites to HIV/AIDS 501 Training

1. The participant must have had the HIV/AIDS 500 pre-requisite, or equivalent course, no longer than six months prior to registration for the HIV/AIDS 501 course.
2. The participant must successfully complete the prerequisite module prior to participation in the HIV/AIDS 501 course.
3. The participant must complete the registration package, including the disclaimer form, and return to the trainer prior to the class.

Requisite Course Activities – HIV Counselors

1. The participant must attend the entire training. In the event of an emergency, the instructor may make other course completion arrangements at his/her discretion.
2. The participant must demonstrate skills learned through required course exercises.
3. The participant's skills will be consistent with standards outlined in the Technical Assistance Guidelines HIV/AIDS 9.

Post-training Requisites – HIV Counselors

1. All counselors will observe a **minimum** of one pre-test counseling session, one HIV-negative post-test counseling session and one HIV-positive post-test counseling session.
2. All counselors will perform a **minimum** of one pre-test counseling session and one HIV-negative post-test counseling session under the supervision of an experienced counselor.

HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers

Staff who provide instruction to county health department and contract provider HIV counselors regarding HIV pre-test, post-test and partner counseling and referral services methods will be held to the following minimum standards. These staff may include non-county health department staff with the approval of the Early Intervention Consultant and the HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator. All trainers will be held to the same standards.

Pre-requisites to HIV/AIDS 501 Train-the-Trainer Course

1. Participants will have successfully completed the HIV/AIDS 501 Course, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 manual and all post-training requisites no longer than six months prior to becoming an HIV/AIDS 501 Trainer.
2. Participants will have a minimum of 40 hours of HIV counseling and testing experience, including at least one actual HIV-positive post-test counseling session (role plays are not acceptable).
3. Participants will have observed a minimum of one STD staff member providing partner notification services in the field.
4. Participants will have the ability to teach, train or speak in a public setting.

Requisite Course Activities – HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers

1. Participants will successfully complete the HIV/AIDS 501 Train-the-Trainer Course.
2. Participants will co-teach a minimum of one HIV/AIDS 501 course with an Early Intervention Consultant.
3. Participants will conduct a minimum of one HIV/AIDS 501 course under the observation of an Early Intervention Consultant.

Post-training Requisites – HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers

1. The Early Intervention Consultant will review all documentation of the participant's successful completion of requisite activities prior to issuing a final certificate.
2. HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers will be monitored a minimum of one time annually by the Early Intervention Consultant or designee, using a standardized tool.
3. HIV/AIDS 501 course class rosters and participant evaluations will be maintained by the HIV/AIDS 501 Trainer and made available to the Early Intervention Consultant, or designee, upon request.

Early Intervention Consultants

Staff who have been hired as Early Intervention Consultants and have the responsibility of providing training to HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers will be held to the following minimum standards.

Pre-requisites to Becoming an Early Intervention Consultant

1. The new Early Intervention Consultant will successfully complete all of the components for HIV/AIDS counselors and HIV/AIDS 501 Trainers.
2. Participants will have presented at least three successful HIV/AIDS 501 courses or have comparable training experience.

Requisite Course Activities – Early Intervention Consultants

1. Participants will work with a minimum of two experienced Early Intervention Consultants and observe at least one HIV/AIDS Train-the-Trainer Course.
2. Participants will co-teach a minimum of one HIV/AIDS Train-the-Trainer Course with an experienced Early Intervention Consultant.

Post-training Requisites – Early Intervention Consultants

1. All HIV/AIDS Train-the-Trainer Courses will be presented by a team of two trainers, decided upon at the local level through the HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator.
2. Early Intervention Consultants will receive annual reviews for the purposes of assessing train-the-trainer courses. Reviews will be coordinated by another Early Intervention Consultant and their local HIV/AIDS Program Coordinator.