

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES MINIMUM TRAINING STANDARDS

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INTRODUCTION

Section [63.2-1604](#) of the Code of Virginia, required that the Department of Social Services (Department) establish, and the State Board of Social Services approve, by September 15, 2001, minimum training standards for Adult Protective Services (APS) workers in the Commonwealth. The Code was amended pursuant to the enrollment of two bills with similar language, Senate Bill 827 and House Bill 1717 (see Appendix A for the Code citation). The Code requires that all APS workers in local departments of social services (local departments) complete the required training within one year from the date of implementation of the minimum training standards, within the first year of their employment or within the first year of their being assigned to work in the Adult Protective Services program. Continuing education after the first year of training is also required as a part of the minimum training standards plan. The implementation date of the required minimum training was January 1, 2002.

For purposes of this document, an APS worker (meaning both an APS worker and an APS supervisor) is employed by a local department of social services and conducts APS investigations and/or provides ongoing services to APS cases.

WHO MUST ATTEND TRAINING?

Within the first year of employment or within the first year of being assigned to work in the Adult Protective Services program, all APS workers and APS supervisors shall complete the four core courses and any additional training recommended by the APS supervisor or person managing the APS program in the local department of social services.

CPS workers and others who are responsible for APS on-call or APS intake activities but do not conduct APS investigations, must take **ADS 5052: APS for On-Call Workers**, an online course offered through the Knowledge Center. This online course is in lieu of the full curriculum of required APS core courses.

CORE COURSES

ADS1000: Adult Services/Adult Protective Services New Worker Policy Training

The goal of this course is for participants to learn the basic policy requirements of the Adult Services (AS)/Adult Protective Services (APS) programs in Virginia. Participants will become knowledgeable about the laws, regulations, and policies that guide AS/APS practice at the local level. They will have an opportunity to practice documenting the policy requirements in ASAPS, the online case documentation system. Topics include: purpose and philosophy of AS/APS; definitions of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation in Virginia; how to receive and respond to a report of adult abuse or neglect, including conducting an APS investigation; best

practices and policy requirements for provision of ongoing services in an open AS/APS case; how to conduct an assessment, develop a service plan, and ensure that appropriate services are delivered; how to document all policy requirements in ASAPS and/or hard copy file; requirements for informing all parties while maintaining confidentiality.

ADS1031: Assessing Capacity

The goal of this course is to help participants develop specific knowledge and skills to effectively assess capacity and address the needs of older adults. Participants will review and practice using the Capacity-Risk Model to differentiate an adult's capacity from incapacity. Topics include: ethical issues and the impact of values; differences between functional incapacity and legal incapacity; use of multiple indicators in assessment; comparison of standards of capacity with eccentricity and risk-taking behavior; instruments for assessing capacity; writing the evaluation report; determining the need for involuntary services.

ADS2013: Investigating Self-Neglect

NOTE: This course replaced **ADS5511: Substance/Medication Abuse in Older Adults and Adults With Disabilities** as a mandated course effective January 1, 2004.

Participants are encouraged to take **ADS1031: Assessing Capacity**, which includes an overview of the risk/capacity model, prior to taking this course.

Self-neglect cases are a growing part of APS caseloads. This course explores the indicators of this widespread phenomenon. Participants learn how to assess for self-neglect, and identify service options for both voluntary and involuntary clients. Legal and ethical implications of self-neglect are also reviewed. Topics include: distinguishing self-neglect from caregiver neglect; assessment skills and service options based on the "strengths perspective"; identification of treatable physical and/or psychiatric factors that can contribute to self-neglect; the individual's right to choose vs. the rights of the larger community; self-neglect and end-of-life issues.

ADS2141: APS Facility Investigations

Participants gain an understanding of the policy requirements and special challenges and dynamics of facility investigations. The course focuses on the investigative skills and techniques unique to the complexity of facility investigations and partnering with the regulatory authorities that provide oversight. Topics include: APS investigative processes in long-term care facilities, acute care facilities, and other group care facilities; policy unique to facility investigations; use of joint investigations; indicators and evidence; use of facility charts and records during the investigation; types of abuse, neglect, and exploitation found in facilities; case documentation and disposition; strategies for follow-up and monitoring.

ADDITIONAL FIRST-YEAR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

After the four core courses have been completed, additional training in the first year is required ONLY if it is determined that an APS worker needs additional training. The APS worker and his/her supervisor or person managing the APS program at the local department should conduct an assessment of additional training needs. If the worker and supervisor or person managing the APS program identify the need for additional courses during the first year, the APS worker must complete the needed courses.

New courses may be substituted for the four core courses as the training needs of local APS workers and supervisors change. The Adult Services Program Manager, in consultation with other Adult Services Program staff, will determine when changes are needed.

SPECIAL TRAINING CIRCUMSTANCES

1. AS/APS New Worker Policy Training Course Completed Since 1993

If it can be documented that an APS worker has completed the AS/APS new worker policy training since 1993, the worker will have met the minimum training requirements for the AS/APS new worker policy training. No credit will be provided for AS/APS new worker policy training taken before 1993.

2. Core Courses Completed Prior to Implementation of Minimum Training Requirements

Any of the other required core courses that were completed by an APS worker prior to January 1, 2002 will count towards fulfilling the minimum training standards. The APS worker should obtain and provide the required documentation of completion of required core courses to his/her immediate supervisor or the person managing the APS program at the local department of social services.

CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

After completion of the core minimum training standards courses, APS workers shall continue professional development through a minimum of 20 hours of professional continuing education activities annually in the fields of APS, aging, and long-term care. Continuing education activities to be credited toward the 20 hours should be pre-approved by the local department of social services' APS supervisor or person managing the APS program. Continuing education activities may include organized learning activities from accredited university or college academic courses, continuing education programs, workshops, seminars and conferences.

Documentation of continuing education activities is the responsibility of the local department of social services.

The Department encourages the professional development of APS workers. The following VISSTA courses are recommended to be taken by all APS workers with particular emphasis on **ADS 5011: Uniform Assessment Instrument (UAI) and ADS 5031: Substitute Decision Making.**

ADS2031: Investigating Adult Sexual Abuse

This course reviews the dynamics of sexual abuse and provides guidance on how to determine when an adult has been sexually abused. Participants learn to apply specialized assessment skills to identify and plan services in these situations. Topics include: risk factors; barriers to detection of the problem; consequences to the adult and family members; guidelines for appropriate interventions; prognosis for treatment, aftercare, and recovery; interviewing tools.

ADS2051: Investigating Financial Exploitation

This course reviews the problem of financial exploitation, identification and prevention of financial exploitation, barriers to identification and investigation of alleged cases, working collaboratively with law enforcement, financial institutions, and other agencies to protect the vulnerable adult, including prosecution of offenders. Topics include: financial exploitation of vulnerable adults, including types of financial exploitation, and differentiating between financial exploitation and poor financial decision-making by a competent adult; identification of the risk factors for financial exploitation; preparation for and completion of an APS investigation of financial exploitation, including how to identify and access appropriate documents; collaboration with financial institutions, law enforcement, and other agencies in joint investigations and sharing of information; providing protection and follow-up support services to the victim of financial exploitation; prosecution strategies; community planning/collaboration with banks, etc.; prevention and reporting.

ADS 5011: Uniform Assessment Instrument (UAI)

NOTE: All qualified assessors for public pay individuals should complete this course in order to conduct appropriate screenings.

This course provides the skills and techniques necessary for implementation of the UAI in field or office settings. Participants learn methods to obtain complete assessment of the individual's strengths, needs, and family and community resources. Topics include: development of the UAI and its purpose; common pitfalls in assessment; communication as a key assessment skill; five areas of assessment; correctly completing the UAI, and using the UAI to determine the eligibility for publicly funded long-term care services and to plan services and referrals.

ADS5021: Older Adults and Mental Health Problems

NOTE: Participants are encouraged to take **ADS1031: Assessing Capacity** prior to taking this course.

This course helps participants learn to recognize and assess mental health problems as they present in older adults. Participants explore appropriate and feasible service planning options that include coordination with mental health services. Topics include: DSM-IV Five Axis diagnosis procedures; decision-making schemata for differential diagnosis; psychotropic medications, side effects, and drug interactions; geriatric mental health assessment (psychiatric and mental status); coordination and collaboration between CSB and AS/APS workers.

ADS5031: Substitute Decision Making

This course guides participants to explore the full range of options available for substitute decision making for older persons and the disabled- from least to most restrictive, and voluntary to involuntary. Topics include: representative payee, powers of attorney, advance directives, guardianship; advantages, limitations, and ethical issues for each option; the relationship of capacity to assessment; processes, types, and proceedings associated with guardianship.

ADS5511 Substance/Medication Abuse in Older Adults and Adults With Disabilities

This course examines alcohol abuse and medication mismanagement which are more common among older adults and individuals with disabilities than the use of illegal drugs. Participants learn to apply specialized assessment skills to identify and plan services in these situations. Topics include: risk factors for abuse of alcohol and prescription drugs; barriers to the detection of the problem; the complexity of medication management; consequences to the adult and family members; guidelines for appropriate interventions; prognosis for treatment, aftercare, and recovery; substance, medication, and food interactions.

DVS1051 Domestic Violence and Older Adults

This course is suitable for new and experienced workers who need in-depth information on domestic violence and older adults. Participants learn to identify and understand the issues surrounding spousal or partner abuse as adults age and to develop skills to deliver services for older victims and batterers. Topics include: domestic violence in later life; differences between spousal violence and caregiver stress; the influence of culture and the role of power and control in violent relationships; barriers to seeking and accepting formal assistance; specialized assessment techniques; and realistic interventions for older victims and batterers.

ONLINE COURSES

ADS1102: Private Pay Uniform Assessment Instrument (UAI)

This course helps learners gain information and skills necessary to complete the Private Pay UAI for applicants to and current residents of assisted living facilities. Participants learn by electronically completing and reviewing a practice assessment. Topics include: “best practice” for completing assessments; determining level of care; relationship between assessment areas and summaries; integrating assessment information; mechanics of filling out the UAI form correctly.

ADS5052: APS for On-Call Workers

This course helps participants gain the skills needed to properly handle AS/APS services at intake. Participants learn to complete intake procedures and determine validity of APS reports. Topics include: “Nuts and bolts” of APS; four criteria for determining validity; distinguishing between “crisis” and “emergency”; skills involved in making the intake process effective; mandated reporters; comparison of CPS and APS procedures.

ADS5055: Mandated Reporters: Recognizing and Reporting Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of Adults

This self-paced, interactive, online course is designed to help professionals designated as mandated reporters in Virginia to recognize the signs of adult abuse, neglect and exploitation. Upon completion of this course, mandated reporters will better understand their responsibility regarding the procedures involved in reporting mistreatment of older adults and adults with an incapacitation.

DSS and LDSS staff should access the course via the Knowledge Center.

Mandated reporters outside of the DSS and LDSS system may access **ADS 5055** via the Virginia Institute for Social Services Training Activities (VISSTA) website at:
http://www.vcu.edu/vissta/non_vdss_employees/mandated_reporter_courses.htm.

ACCESSING AS/APS COURSES IN THE KNOWLEDGE CENTER

DSS and LDSS staff can access AS/APS courses via the Knowledge Center (KC). The KC is a learning management system designed to manage, track, and quantify all of the training, continuing education, employee development, certification and other learning activities of the Department. Local employees of departments of social services manage their learning through the KC. The Department offers a variety of learning methods including instructor-led training, e-learning, and self-paced courses. VCU-VISSTA and other state sponsored courses for local employees are offered and managed through the Knowledge Center. The Knowledge Center can

be accessed through SPARK at
http://www.localagency.dss.state.va.us/divisions/training/knowledge_center/

Once staff has entered the KC website using their login ID and password, AS/APS courses may be accessed by clicking the Learning Center option on the webpage and select the “Course Information and Enrollment” option. To search for AS/APS courses, enter “ADS” in the keyword box in the upper right corner of the webpage.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LOCAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The director of the local department of social services has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that APS workers receive and document the completion of the required minimum APS training in accordance with these standards. The APS supervisor or the person managing the APS program at the local level shall maintain this documentation in the worker’s personnel record.

For APS workers who have not completed the minimum training requirements, the person supervising or managing the APS program at the local department of social services will provide direct supervision (a close review of all investigations and disposition decisions made during the investigation, including documenting the supervisor’s review). The supervisor will assure that the APS workers who report to him/her complete the required training within the given timeframes.

The APS worker is responsible for the management of his/her continuing education in the field of APS. It is the responsibility of the APS social worker to discuss and plan training with the APS supervisor or the person managing the APS program at the local department and ensure that appropriate documentation is placed in his/her personnel record.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Any questions regarding the completion of APS minimum training requirements should be directed to the appropriate regional Adult Services/Adult Protective Services Program Consultant:

Heather Crutchfield --- Eastern Region ---- 757-491-3983
Barbara Jenkins ----- Central Region -----804-662-9783
Carol McCray -----Western Region ----276-676-5636
Bill Parcell -----Piedmont Region ---540-857-6502
David Stasko -----Northern Region ---540-347-6313

Appendix A

§ 63.2-1604. Establishment of Adult Protective Services Unit; powers and duties.

There is hereby created the Adult Protective Services Unit within the Adult Services Program in the Department, which, in coordination with adult protective services programs in the local departments, shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To support, strengthen, and evaluate adult protective services programs at local departments;
2. To assist in developing and implementing programs to respond to and prevent adult abuse, neglect or exploitation;
3. To prepare, disseminate, and present educational programs and materials on adult abuse, neglect and exploitation to mandated reporters and the public;
4. To establish minimum standards of training and provide educational opportunities to qualify social workers in the field of adult protective services to determine whether reports of adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation are substantiated. The Department shall establish, and the Board shall approve, a uniform training program for adult protective services workers in the Commonwealth. All adult protective services workers shall complete such training within one year from the date of implementation of the training program or within the first year of their employment;
5. To develop policies and procedures to guide the work of persons in the field of adult protective services;
6. To prepare and disseminate statistical information on adult protective services in Virginia;
7. To operate the adult protective services 24-hour toll-free hotline and provide training and technical assistance to the hotline staff;
8. To provide coordination among the adult protective services program and other state agencies; and
9. To work collaboratively with other agencies in the Commonwealth to facilitate the reporting and investigation of suspected adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

(1998, c. 149, § 63.1-55.02; 2001, cc. 701, 716, 746; 2002, c. 747; 2004, cc. 749, 1011.)