On-Demand Online Curriculum Standards and Review

PROCESS GUIDE

Contents

Introduction

Background

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) is the component of the U.S. Department of Justice that advances the practice of community policing in U.S. state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. The COPS Office does its work principally by sharing information and making awards to and for law enforcement agencies around the United States. The knowledge resources available from the COPS Office provide essential information in the form of training, technical assistance, promising practices for law enforcement, and publications composed by subject matter experts within the federal government, academia, and law enforcement.

The COPS Office Online Curriculum Standards, Review, and Approval Guide was established to provide guidance to COPS Office training providers and program managers on instructional design, course delivery, and the process by which curriculum will be reviewed and approved by the COPS Office. To learn more about COPS Office training, visit the training tab on the COPS Office website: https://cops.usdoj. gov/training.

The goals of the Online Curriculum Standards and Review Process Guide are as follows:

- Establish a common process for the development of COPS Office online training initiatives.

- Manage quality control through a series of review and approval checkpoints before movement to the next development phase.

- Establish a process for vetting COPS Office online training content, style, format, and quality in a manner comparable to other COPS Office products and services.

- Establish clear outcome expectations of online training initiatives between program managers and awardees.

- Maintain COPS Office online training products and services by keeping them current, relevant, and applicable to the law enforcement field.

Training guiding principles

Any training or training materials developed or delivered with award funding provided by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services is to adhere to the following guiding principles:

1. **Trainings must comply with applicable law.**

   In developing and conducting training under the award, recipients (and any subrecipients) shall not violate the Constitution or any federal law, including any law prohibiting discrimination.

2. **The content of trainings and training materials must be accurate, appropriately tailored, and focused.**

   The content of training programs must be accurate, useful to those being trained, and well matched to the program's stated objectives. Training materials used or distributed at trainings must be accurate, relevant, and consistent with these guiding principles.

3. **Trainers must be well-qualified in the subject area and skilled in presenting it.**

Trainers must possess the subject matter knowledge and the subject-specific training experience necessary to meet the objectives of the training. In selecting or retaining a trainer, recipients (or sub-recipients) should consider such factors as the trainer's resume and written materials, interviews with the trainer, observation of other trainings conducted by the trainer, feedback from other entities with which the trainer has worked, training participant feedback and evaluations, and the general reputation of the trainer.

4. **Trainers must demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism.**

Trainers must comport themselves with professionalism. While trainings will necessarily entail varying teaching styles, techniques, and degrees of formality, as appropriate to the particular training goal, professionalism demands that trainers instruct in the manner that best communicates the subject matter while conveying respect for all.

Definitions

Training

Training refers to the teaching and learning activities undertaken to help members of an organization acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes needed by a particular job or organization. Training is driven by specific goals and objectives, but it is an ongoing process, requiring continuing self-reflection and evaluation.

- **Learning outcomes and objectives.** Objectives describe what learners should be able to know and do after training. Learning outcomes establish the criteria by which the training will be judged a success. Training objectives and learning outcomes should be aligned with an employee's position and with the organization's goals and mission.

- **Self-reflection and evaluation.** Self-reflection should be a conscious process of learners critically analyzing the training material and testing their own understanding and retention; it is an internal check on the progress and outcomes of the training. Evaluation is the external check; it should consist of setting goals, in accordance with the learning outcomes and objectives, and conducting pre- and post-testing and a final course evaluation to ensure those goals are met.

On-Demand Online Training

On-demand online training refers to training conducted via an interactive internet browser–based learning system. On-demand online training is anywhere, anytime instruction. For the purpose of this guide, on-demand online training is considered to be self-directed and self-paced; for guidance on instructor-facilitated online training, consult your program manager.

Training Materials

Guidebooks, webinars, articles, conference presentations, podcasts, videos, blogs, and newsfeeds (to provide a few examples) can serve as support material in trainings or as stand-alone material to increase knowledge, but on their own they cannot be defined as training.

Content and Functionality

Content refers to the subject matter of the training and includes all modules, activities, resources, and all other substantive material of the training. Functionality refers to the operations of the training on an online platform.

- **Content and functionality development.** This type of development occurs when the awardee develops both the content and functionality of an online course for their own website/training portal or for the COPS Office Training Portal.

- **Content development.** This type of development occurs when the awardee has the subject matter expertise to develop the content of the course, and the functionality of the course is developed by the COPS Office Training Portal team for the COPS Office Training Portal.

New and Pre-existing Training

- **New development.** Awards for new development are intended to fund the creation of new online course content; they may also cover the development of new functionality.

- **Pre-existing training.** Awards for pre-existing training cover reviewing and potentially revising online training courses that already exist and bringing them into the COPS Office training initiative.

COPS Office Training Portal and Website

The COPS Office Training Portal provides a convenient way for law enforcement professionals and community partners to access interactive online training in emerging public safety topics and serves as a gateway to a variety of multimedia community policing resources at no cost. The Training Portal is the online training gateway for all COPS Office–sponsored training and is in two parts: (1) landing page website and (2) learning management system. COPS Office–sponsored online courses will be hosted on the Portal unless otherwise agreed upon by the COPS Office and the awardee.

Awardee Training Portal and Website

Awardee websites are training portals are designed and owned by awardees. COPS Office–sponsored courses may be hosted here with agreement from the COPS Office but will also be hosted on the Training Portal simultaneously. At the end of the award period, all COPS Office–sponsored training materials must be transferred to the COPS Office for inclusion on the training portal, following the specifications outlined by the COPS Office. More information on post-award training can be found in "Post–COPS Office–Funded Training" on page 21 of this guide.

Development and Launch Preparation of New Online Courses

I. Course Development

The process of course development, from the course design document to the first course delivery, generally takes between 12 and 18 months. Each course is unique, however, so the actual development time may be longer or shorter than the estimate. One of your first steps in the course development process should be to work with your COPS Office program manager and develop a robust course development timeline.

To ensure all requirements are met, arrange a time to talk with your COPS Office program manager on a monthly basis (or more often as needed). Remember, your COPS Office program manager is here to help: Do not hesitate to reach out via email or phone.

All COPS Office training providers are required to submit, at a minimum, the following course materials, in sequential order, to their COPS Office program manager. (If the training provider is only developing storyboards for the course, then item four will not apply.)

1. Course design document

2. Draft storyboards and any accompanying documents

3. Final storyboards and any accompanying documents

4. Final, interactive, online course and any accompanying documents

Your COPS Office program manager will ensure the materials follow the COPS Office review and approval process. If changes to the materials are required, your program manager will discuss them with you. Please review this information to make sure your materials include the appropriate information.

Overarching requirements

The COPS Office has a series of requirements that apply to all courses in all stages of development, delivery, and online launch:

1. Ensure that all proposed deliverables and publications follow and are in accordance with the COPS Office Editorial and Graphics Style Manual (https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=cops-w0434).

2. All products and deliverables (written, visual, or sound; curricula, reports, or websites) must contain the following statement:

   This project was supported by cooperative agreement number 15JCOPS-2#-GG-XXXXX-XXXX awarded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. References to specific agencies,

companies, products, or services should not be considered an endorsement by the author(s) or the U.S. Department of Justice. Rather, the references are illustrations to supplement discussion of the issues. The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of this publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

3. When appropriate, U.S. Department of Justice publications and other products and deliverables should contain the following copyright notice:

   Copyright© [year work was published] [name of copyright owner]. The U.S. Department of Justice reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and authorize others to use, this resource for Federal Government purposes. This resource may be freely distributed and used for noncommercial and educational purposes only.

4. Ensure that the COPS Office online training portal formatting procedures are followed. The formatting procedures are available on the COPS Office website: https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Training_Portal_Formatting_Requirements.pdf.

5. All videos developed for online training curricula should follow the COPS Office video development guidelines (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Video Development ProcessGuide_2023.pdf).

6. If the online course includes supplemental materials such as a participant guide or resource packet, they should include a front, inside, and back cover developed with the COPS Office training templates. Templates are available on the COPS Office website: https://cops.usdoj.gov/training.

7. If materials or toolkits that accompany the training are developed and could be released as stand-alone resources, the full COPS Office publishing process should be followed.

8. If the course will include previously created printed course materials and resources, the COPS Office will review those materials and resources and provide guidance on editorial requirements.

9. All requirements and tasks outlined in each cooperative agreement must be followed in addition to the COPS Office Curriculum Standards, Review, and Approval Guide (https://cops.usdoj.gov/training).

10. All content must be free from discriminatory examples and terminology and negative stereotyping.

11. Grantees may be required to submit full source files for any course to the COPS Office or to the COPS Office Training Portal administrator.

12. All courses will be hosted on the COPS Training Portal servers and may not be connected to any other LMS without explicit written permission from the COPS Office. This requirement does not restrict the ability of a developer to separately host the course on their own LMS if allowed by their cooperative agreement.

13. All courses' final product will contain professional, human narration.

COPS Office logos

The COPS Office has two logos for training documents: the training logo and the main COPS Office logo. All COPS Office–sponsored training materials should prominently display both logos. Contact your COPS Office program manager for logos if you need them in an image format. Supplemental materials to the training should also include the COPS Office logo, legal disclaimer, and, if necessary, the copyright notice. Awardees should not use the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) seal in conjunction with the COPS Office logos.

When placing the COPS Office logo and training logo on a colored background, please be careful of the color you choose, as the contrast can affect readability. To avoid visibility issues, make sure (1) the COPS logotype, (2) the red separator rule, and (3) the identifier and parent affiliate text are all clearly legible. Any alteration of the logo is a violation of usage standards because it creates inconsistency and confusion for readers and diminishes the integrity of our agency's identity.

For further assistance with logo usage, consult the *Graphic Standards and Identity System for the COPS Office* (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Logo_Standards_Manual.pdf) and Logo Fact Sheet (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Logo_Guideline_FactSheet.pdf) on the training section of the COPS Office website.

In addition to the aforementioned COPS Office logos, the Training Portal has a separate logo for its sole use.

508 conformance

Ensure that all electronic and information technology deliverables (websites and web-based information, online training, and video and multimedia products) are developed and produced in a format that is accessible according to accessibility requirements as specified in section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Specifically, video should contain closed-captioning and audio description options. Electronic publications should be created in HTML, fully tagged PDF, or accessible text file format, and all websites must be fully conformant with 508 accessibility standards. For more information on section 508 accessibility requirements, consult http://www.section508.gov/.

- It is important to note that under section 508, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to access available to others.

- If deliverables are not 508-conformant, they may not be published in print or online.

STEP 1. COURSE DISCUSSION

To start the course development process, you will participate in a course kickoff meeting with your COPS Office program manager. The purposes of this meeting are (1) to discuss the training cycle and (2) to ensure everyone agrees on the goals, objectives, target audience, and length of the course. The training cycle refers to the course's purpose and assessment, planning and preparation, presentation and facilitation, and evaluation and performance.

Your program manager will work with you to establish a date and time for this discussion. If subsequent discussions are needed prior to the development of the course design document, your program manager will inform you not to proceed with the course design document until all parties agree on the overall purpose of the course.

STEP 2. CREATE A COURSE DESIGN DOCUMENT

The course design document (CDD) is a comprehensive outline of the content of a course which serves as the foundation of course development. The CDD lays out the scope, goals, objectives, exercises, and overall strategy of the course. Laying these out clearly ensures that both the COPS Office and the course developers have a clear plan for the course.

The CDD should contain, at a minimum, the following items:

- **Course title.** State the title of the training.

- **Scope statement.** State the subject matter of the course and how the course addresses the topic.

- **Course overview.** Provide a summary of the course.

- **Course purpose.** State the intent of the course.

- **Central course topics.** State which topics are included in the course.

- **Central course activities.** Provide an overview of general course activities and the instructional strategy.

- **Terminal learning objectives.** Provide an action verb statement that outlines what the student is expected to learn or be capable of performing at the conclusion of the course.

- **Establishing learning objective(s).** Provide the incremental learning objectives that support the terminal learning objectives. These should be measurable performance statements describing how the student will demonstrate achievement of the terminal learning objective.

- **Duration of the course.** State the course length.

- **Target audience.** State the intended participants in the course.

- **Eligibility requirements.** Specify who is eligible to participate in the course.

- **Course design.** Describe the instructional strategies and design consideration, e.g., activities that ask learners to do something with the new information or skills like solve a problem, make decisions in a scenario, or create something using the concepts.

- **Prerequisites.** Describe whether a participant needs to have learned any fundamentals before taking the course.

- **Adult learning strategies and principles.** State the adult learning strategies and principles used and practiced in the course.

- **Evaluation strategy.** Describe the learning checks, Level I and Level II evaluations, and overarching learning strategy for the course.

- **Course progression.** Describe how the course is divided and the flow of the course.

- **Modules.** Describe each module in outline form and include, at minimum, the following information:

  - Module title

  - Module description

  - Terminal learning objective for each module

  - Establishing learning objectives for each module

  - Outline of module contents to include exercises, videos, activities

  - Resource list

  - References

In addition, general requirements for the CDD include the following:

- Outline format is consistent throughout the lesson plans.

- Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are correct.

- Training aids are scheduled at appropriate times.

- Modules have a variety of training aids.

- References are cited following the COPS Office Editorial and Graphics Style Manual (https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=cops-w0434).

- Modules include essential information that supports each of the learning objectives or outcomes.

- Modules include teaching techniques that will stimulate and facilitate learning.

- Introduction shows the relationship of this topical subject to the importance to the law enforcement field.

- Modules explain the importance of this topic and how it will be applied to participants' jobs.

- Time is identified to allow participants to know how long the course and each module is projected to take.

- The ADDIE (analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation) model of instruction should be used in the development of the online course.

  - For more on the ADDIE process, please see the COPS Office ADDIE factsheet (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/ADDIE_Fact_Sheet.pdf).

The CDD should be submitted to your COPS Office program manager for review and approval within the agreed-upon time frame for CDD completion. The review and approval process will include, at a minimum, an internal COPS Office review, which takes approximately two weeks. If the review and approval process indicates revisions to the course are necessary, those revisions should be made and resubmitted to your program manager within the agreed-upon time frame. Once the CDD has been approved, your program manager will give permission to develop the storyboards. You should not start the storyboard development phases until your COPS Office program manager indicates that the CDD is approved.

For an easy-to-use reminder of the required information in the CDD, the COPS Office has a CDD Fact Sheet (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/FactSheet_CourseDesignDocumentTemplate.pdf).

STEP 3. DEVELOP STORYBOARDS

Once the CDD is approved, the course storyboards should be developed in their entirety. The storyboards should include all course content and a written description of the functionality requirements. Course content includes all images, videos, podcasts, voiceovers, assessments and evaluations, and all text, including questions and instructions. Functionality requirements include technical specifications as well as descriptions of the navigation and user experience. The course should not be fully developed in electronic form until the storyboards have been approved. If the awardee is only developing the content of the course, all functionality requirements will be met by the training portal team.

At a minimum, the storyboards should meet the following requirements:

- Storyboards are written in a format between that of a book manuscript and a film script.

- Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are correct.

- Courses are "chunked" into modules of no longer than 60 minutes in length.

- Training aids are scheduled at appropriate times and there is variety in training aid types.

- Content includes essential information that supports each of the learning objectives or outcomes.

- References are cited following the *COPS Office Editorial and Graphics Style Manual* (https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=cops-w0434).

- Assets (images, videos, narration, etc.) do not violate copyright infringement laws.

- Text is no smaller than 8-point (if designing for mobile, should be 12-point or larger).

- Training objectives and outcomes are explicitly stated, comprehensive, and measurable.

- Training objectives and outcomes match training needs.

- Course content includes techniques that will stimulate learning.

- Level of difficulty is appropriate for the participants.

- Course introduction shows the relationship of the subject to the law enforcement field.

- Storyboards explain the importance of this topic and how it will be applied to participants' jobs.

- Information is grouped into small and convenient segments and content is sequenced in a logical and appropriate manner.

- The beginning of each module indicates its expected completion time for self-paced scheduling by participants.

- Storyboards contain clearly written instructions for practical and interactive exercises and demonstrations.

- A final course evaluation is included.

- Sufficient reflections, quizzes, and tests are included to check understanding, including comprehensive pre-and post-course assessments.

- Directions explain how to find and proceed through all course components.

- Directions for exercises and assignments clearly indicate where to start and what steps to follow.

- For awardees developing their own functionality, storyboards include help features.

- Storyboards demonstrate that course content and functionality are compatible with participants' existing hardware and networking.

- Storyboards demonstrate course content and functionality can easily transition between online web browsers.

- Instructions, interface design, and navigation directions are logical, consistent, and efficient throughout the training program.

- Storyboards include a site map or table of contents effectively orienting participants to their location within the program.

- Links are self-describing.

- Any media integrated into the training enhances learning.

- A glossary of key terms is included.

- Any other information outlined in your cooperative agreement is included.

Work with your COPS Office program manager to devise a review process for the storyboards. It may be beneficial to have your program manager review modules or blocks of content to ensure everyone is on the same page. Once complete, the storyboards should be submitted to your COPS Office program manager electronically for review and approval prior to creating an electronic version of the course, hosting the pilot, or launching the course. The review and approval process will at a minimum include a COPS Office internal document review, external peer review, and vetting. Until approval to move onto the next step is given, no further steps should be taken to deliver or market the course.

Peer review

Peer review is the process of experts (law enforcement, researchers, academics, etc.) from outside the COPS Office reviewing the entire course for relevance and applicability to the field. Most peer-reviewed documents have three reviewers. The review is confidential, so you will not know the names of those reviewing your course materials.

During their review of the course materials, the peer reviewers fill out a peer-review questionnaire and provide a rating for the course. When the reviewers are finished, your program manager will review their feedback and ratings and share them with you. Your program manager will ask you to make the recommended changes. If the reviewers recommended any changes that you decline to make, you will need to write a memo to your program manager outlining which changes you decline and your reasons. Your program manager will review this memo and enter it into the COPS Office review process, which could

take up to two weeks. During this time, do not move forward on the course until you have your program manager's approval. The COPS Office may determine that you still need to make the changes. All memos related to this determination will be saved in your official award folder.

It takes four weeks for the external peer reviewers to read the materials and provide comments. If changes need to be made to the course, they will be made after the review period. You will work with your COPS Office program manager to determine a time frame for completing the finalized draft course.

Vetting

Once the peer-reviewed, finalized storyboards are complete, your program manager will send the course through the DOJ vetting process. The purpose of vetting is for the DOJ to review the course for organizational conflicts of interest and any implied endorsements of products or services. Your program manager might ask you to send the course documents in a specific format for vetting. When vetting is finished, your program manager will review the vetting feedback and share it with you. Your program manager will ask you to make any recommended changes. If any changes are recommended that you decline to make, you will need to write a memo to your program manager outlining which changes you decline to make and your reasons. Your program manager will review the memo and enter it into the COPS Office review process, which could take up to two weeks. During this time, do not move forward on the course until you have your program manager's approval. The COPS Office may determine that you still need to make the changes. All memos related to this determination will be saved in your official award folder.

Vetting typically takes two to three weeks; it is unlikely that it will take less time, though depending on the length of the training it may take longer. Most vetting clears during the two- to three-week period with few to no changes identified. If changes do need to be made to the course, they will be made after the two- to three-week vetting period. You will work with your COPS Office program manager to determine a timeframe for completing the finalized draft course.

Until approval to move onto the next step is given, no further steps should be taken to develop or market the course.

STEP 4. DEVELOP ELECTRONIC COURSE

For awardees developing only the content for an online course, step 4 will be the responsibility of the COPS Training Portal team.

For awardees developing the full electronic course, including functionality, step 4 should include all elements from steps 1 through 3 and should elaborate on all of those requirements to make a robust and functioning online course. In addition, the completed electronic course should also meet the following requirements:

• COPS Office logos are used in the course. The DOJ seal should not be used.

• Compatible with the COPS Office Online Training Portal (a list of the specifications are outlined in the Portal formatting requirements document: https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Training_Portal_Formatting_Requirements.pdf).

- Compatible with Moodle.

  – The approximate file size limit for Moodle is 2.5 GB.

- Published to LMS - SCORM 1.2.

- Includes HTML5 output, if it is anticipated that some users will access the course on a mobile device (cell phone, tablet, etc.).

- Report status in the learning management system (LMS) configured as Passed/Incomplete.

- Each lesson conclusion summarizes the key points and objectives and has correctly cited endnotes for further reading.

- Includes an easy-to-access glossary of key terms.

- Participants can print course information.

- Participants can save work, exit the program, and come back to the program at a later time to start working where they left off.

- Participants should not be able to skip through and take the completion test without experiencing course materials.

- Participants can control the speed at which they proceed through the course and can replay or review material previously accessed.

- The visual layout of the content is well organized.

- Program effectively orients participants to their location within the program.

- Layout of on-screen text is clear and readable.

- Content, interface design, and navigation directions are logical, consistent, and efficient throughout the training program.

- Technical requirements can be met with participants' existing hardware and networking.

- Program is easy to access through Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari, or Firefox. If the program cannot be accessed via a certain online platform, specify this limitation upfront.

- Help features are found throughout and are easy to understand and access.

- Help features are specific to instructional materials and course functionality.

- Developers may provide a high-resolution image of their organization logo, which will be added to the course certificate if they choose.

- Developers are required to create and submit to VCPI a "branding package" to be used by the COPS Training Portal team to ensure consistent branding among Portal resources and to assist in promoting the course. The branding package should consist of the following:

  – Your organization's logo

    - Submit the logo's design file in .ai, .eps, or .svg format

- If the design file is not available, please submit the highest resolution copy of your logo possible, preferably with a transparent background

- Photos and graphics used in the development of the course

  - Include the highest resolution versions of images and graphics available

  - Acceptable formats include .png, .jpg, .jpeg, .gif, .webm, .svg, .ai, .eps, .psd

  - Do not include any files for which the usage rights or licenses have not been secured

- A promotional image for the course

  - 1200 pixels x 627 pixels at 300 dpi

  - Must include the course title and be 508 conformant; may include your logo

  - If you are unable to produce a promotional image, please speak with your program manager to discuss options for having one built for the course

A complete course transcript must be included in the course for screen readers. Any videos included must be transcribed and transcriptions should be included and accessible. All on-screen objects should have alt text to describe the component to participants using a screen reader. Each course developer should designate a 508 conformance point of contact. More on 508 conformance can be found in the "Overarching requirements" section of this guide.

The electronic course should be submitted to your COPS Office program manager electronically for pilot testing prior to launching the course. **The course cannot be piloted or launched until your program manager provides approval.**

STEP 5. PILOT THE COURSE

The pilot is a first run through the course, designed to test the course content, functionality, and flow before the national launch. All courses, including asynchronous eLearning courses, require a pilot. Pilots should generally take place at a point in the development of the training that will allow the students to fully evaluate the course while maximizing the ability to make changes in a cost-effective manner. For example, where narration is required to complete the course, a computerized reading of the narration will suffice for a pilot. Do not schedule your pilot without approval from your COPS Office program manager (PM) to ensure that it takes place at the optimal point. Your PM will need to attend the pilot, either in person or virtually, and evaluate it. In general, it will be preferable for the pilot to be arranged to allow for the PM to attend in person.

Grantees shall follow the subsequent guidelines when arranging pilots; deviations from these guidelines will require approval from the COPS Office PM.

- A minimum of 10 outside attendees will be scheduled to take part in the pilot; it is preferable to schedule more than 10 to allow for unanticipated no-shows.

- Attendees should include the following:

  - Active law enforcement officers, constituting at least half of the scheduled attendees

  - Representatives of any other relevant stakeholder groups (e.g., prosecutors or co-responders)

- An explanation of the pilot process should be given to participants, including the following:

  – That the course is being piloted and that, depending on feedback, it may or may not be released in its current form

  – The intent behind the development of the course

  – A general description of what the developer/COPS Office want students to learn from the course

  – The process by which the pilot will take place, including how students will give feedback

- Students should complete all aspects of the course, including pre-test, post-test, and all modules, including interactive/scenario-based modules, that are expected to be a part of the course.

- Feedback should be solicited from all attendees on both positive and negative aspects of the course, with a focus on whether there are any "fatal flaws" that would prevent the COPS Office from releasing the training in its current form. Negative feedback should include suggestions on how to fix the identified problem whenever possible. Feedback will be solicited in the following forms:

  – Standard evaluation questions found on page 18 using a 1–5 Likert scale

  – Written short answer "additional feedback" question allowing the student to express general thoughts

  – Group discussion, which should be moderated by either the COPS Office PM or a representative of the grantee developer, intended to elicit detailed feedback and assess whether there is general agreement over that feedback; detailed notes should be taken to ensure that all feedback is recorded to assist the grantee and PM in determining what, if any, changes should be made

In general, it is preferable to host pilots in-person where all attendees can individually pilot the course; for example, in a computer lab at a Police Academy or university. However, awardees should be prepared to host the pilot virtually in situations where an in-person pilot is infeasible. Work with your COPS Office PM to determine the best method for the pilot.

The pilot feedback is reviewed by the COPS Office PM and discussed with the awardee to determine next steps. The awardee will provide a list of the identified or known major or minor flaws they plan to immediately address (like spelling, nonfunctional learning elements, or navigation issues). If there are additional requested updates identified by test participants—such as suggested wording, aesthetic, or content changes—these can be discussed with the COPS Office PM to be prioritized based on the need, impact on the budget, or timeline.

If there are high priority edits requested by the COPS Office beyond what was included in the approved storyboards, the awardee may be asked to provide estimated time and budget impacts of potential edits to aid in the decision-making of the COPS Office PM. The awardee and COPS Office PM will notify the awardee regarding the agreed-upon update list of updates (punch list). If a pilot finds that the course needs significant revisions to content or instructional style, your PM will provide you with a corrective action plan to ensure the course is successful.

Even once the agreed upon updates have been made, do not launch the final course until your PM gives the final approval.

Pilots for "hybrid" courses that involve both an asynchronous and instructor-led portion should generally follow the guidelines laid out in this document, but may require adjustments; work with your PM to determine what changes, if any, should be made.

In-person pilots of online courses

For in-person pilots of online courses, ensure that you notify the local U.S. Attorney's Office that a COPS Office–sponsored course will be taking place in their district. Your COPS Office PM can provide you with a list of contacts for U.S. Attorney Offices across the country. U.S. Attorneys' Offices can be great resources, especially for training space and marketing. They also like to know what DOJ training is being delivered in their area.

For in-person pilots of online courses, you will need to follow the DOJ cost reporting requirements. The DOJ requires all awardees delivering training (including pilots) to submit the Conference Cost Request/Reporting Form (CCR) prior to planning a training. For course delivery costing less than $100,000, the form must be submitted to your COPS Office PM at least 90 calendar days in advance of the delivery. For course delivery that costs more than $100,000, the form must be submitted at least 120 calendar days in advance of delivery. The COPS Office may consider late requests—at its sole discretion—but cannot ensure they will receive a decision in time for the training to proceed. Any cancellation costs incurred as a result of late submission may be determined to be unallowable.

Your PM will send you the CCR form and guidance, and you can find the FAQs on the training page of the COPS Office website. Once you have filled out the form, send it to your PM. Your PM will send it for processing and notify you when it is approved. Do not schedule or hold a pilot before approval is given.

For training that includes more than one pilot, it is recommended that for question #7 on the CCR, "Is this a blanket request?," you answer YES, and in question #8 fill out the number of deliveries, year, and locations and start and end dates if you know them. If you do not know the location or start or end dates, you can answer TBD. This will allow you to submit one request for all pilots in a year, so that you do not have to fill out individual forms for each pilot. For costs, input the estimated cost of your most expensive pilot.

Some training deliverables do not require CCR form submission. To determine which TA visits and or training deliverables do not require submission of the CCR form, review the following 10 questions. The COPS Office developed a checklist to alleviate some of the uncertainty regarding whether an event requires prior approval. If the answers to all 10 questions are "No," the event does not require prior approval via the CCR form submission process. It will still require approval from your PM.

1. Is the cost of the event greater than $20,000?

2. Are there meeting room costs?

3. Are audio-visual costs greater than $25 per attendee or more than $1,000 in total?

4. Are there any food and beverage costs?

5. Did the request for the meeting come from multiple jurisdictions or agencies?

6. Do the participants represent multiple agencies that are not co-located or joined by an agreement (e.g., task force with MOU)?

7. Are there trinkets being purchased?

8. Is there a formal published agenda?

9. Are formal discussions or presentation panels planned?

10. Are there logistical planning costs beyond incidental internal administrative costs necessary to arrange travel and lodging for a small number of individuals?

Please reference DOJ Grants Financial Guide: Section 3.10 OJP/COPS Office Conference Approval, Planning and Reporting: *No Prior Approval Required* https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/iii-postaward-requirements#0uxd2 for additional information and/or contact your PM directly.

STEP 6. COPS OFFICE LAUNCH

Your COPS Office program manager will arrange for in-house viewing or a virtual opportunity for interested COPS Office staff to take the class prior to the public launch of the course. Work with your program manager to schedule and ensure the COPS Office staff can view the course. This step may take place during the pilot process, after the pilot (but after the punch list developed), or once the course has been updated and is ready for testing on the COPS Office Training Portal development server. It is not necessary for the course developers to be on site for this viewing session, but there are instances where it is beneficial to be able to communicate with them—discuss the possibility with your COPS Office program manager. If this step takes place after pilot revisions have been made by the awardee, then feedback will be limited to fatal flaws only.

STEP 7. FINAL COURSE, DEVELOPMENTAL LAUNCH, AND PUBLIC LAUNCH

After a course has been updated and finalized and approved by the COPS Office, you can send the course and supporting materials to the COPS Office Training Portal team for them to upload the course onto the COPS Office Training Portal developmental server. The COPS Office Training Portal team will work with you to ensure it is loaded and functions as intended. Once loaded on the COPS Office Training Portal server, it will be tested first by the portal team and then by you and your COPS Office program manager to make sure the course features are functioning as intended (including pre- and post-test and being able to print certificates of completion).

Awardees hosting on their own websites or platforms need to ensure that the program manager is able to view the course on the platform before it is launched.

For awardees developing only the course content, the course launch will be performed by the COPS Training Portal team. You will still be asked to review the portal content once the course has been uploaded into the COPS Training Portal developmental servers.

Once all final reviews have been completed have on developmental servers, the course will ready move into the public launch phase to be coordinated with COPS Office.

STEP 8. MARKETING

Develop and administer a marketing plan in collaboration with your COPS Office program manager. All marketing materials should prominently display the COPS Office logo and training logo and state that the training is supported by the COPS Office. You must submit initial marketing materials to your program manager for review and approval at least 30 days before you embark on email/website/flyer/etc. distribution. The approved materials will then become the approved template for your future marketing efforts. At a minimum, marketing materials should include a summary of the course content, information on who is eligible to take the course, and any student prerequisites. All marketing materials must also include this COPS Office disclaimer:

> This project was supported by cooperative agreement number 15JCOPS-2#-GG-XXXXX-XXXX awarded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

In marketing materials, do not use the DOJ seal or state that the opinions in the training materials are the opinions of the U.S. Department of Justice or COPS Office.

The COPS Office has a marketing fact sheet (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Marketing_Guidelines_ FactSheet.pdf) to help you easily navigate the dos and don'ts of marketing a COPS Office–sponsored course.

II. Public Course Launch

With approval from your program manager, the course can be launched publicly. If the course is hosted on your website, work with your program manager to include a summary of the course and a link to the COPS Office Training Portal. This will help direct more traffic to the course. Ensure that the course is fully functional, has continual maintenance, and supports users through technical assistance from the launch through the end of the award. Awardees will be responsible for the reporting the data on the COPS Office–sponsored training that is taken on their website. If the course is hosted on the COPS Office Training Portal, work with your program manager to develop a summary and link for your own website; the training portal team will ensure functionality and maintenance and provide technical assistance.

III. Evaluation and Deliverable Reporting

All courses should include pre- and post-course assessments for participants, as well as an overall course evaluation administered at the completion of the course. All evaluations should be developed during the course development phase and approved by your program manager (as outlined in part I of this section, "Course Development"). All evaluations and assessments must use a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 equaling "strongly disagree" and 5 equaling "strongly agree." Open-ended discussion questions may also be included in evaluations and assessments.

Course evaluation questions

At a minimum, the course evaluation should include the following Likert scale questions:

- Before the course, I would rate my knowledge, skills, and abilities in this subject as advanced (5), intermediate (4), basic (3), little (2), none (1).

- After the course, I would rate my knowledge, skills, and abilities in this subject as advanced (5), intermediate (4), basic (3), little (2), none (1).

- The training objectives and outcomes for the course are explicitly stated and understandable.

- The course provided the knowledge and skills I need to accomplish the job for which I am receiving training.

- Materials are presented in realistic job scenarios that I can easily transfer to my job.

- Based on the training, I am fully capable of implementing the skills I learned.

- The course content is appropriate for someone within my professional field.

- The course content is appropriate for someone with my level of experience.

- Overall, the course met my needs and expectations.

- Overall, the course is effective in meeting its outlined goals and objectives.

- Overall, this course was a valuable use of my time.

- The training program is easy to access online.

- Interface design and navigation features are logical, consistent, and efficient throughout the course.

- The course directions are clear and easy to understand and explain how to proceed through the course.

- I was able to save work, exit the program, come back to the program at a later time, and start working where I left off.

- I was able to control the speed at which I took the course and could replay or review material previously accessed.

Monthly training summary report

For courses hosted on the COPS Training Portal, the COPS Training Portal team will fulfill the monthly training summary report requirement.

For courses hosted on the awardee's website or portal, the awardee is responsible for developing a monthly summary report. At a minimum, this report should include the number of participants who have taken the course, the ranks or position titles of the participants, participant agency names, and Level I and Level II evaluation results. The monthly training summary report should be submitted to your program manager by the fifth of the month following each reporting month.

Quarterly training data collection and submission

For courses hosted on the COPS Training Portal, the Training Portal team will fulfill the quarterly reporting requirement. For courses hosted on the awardee's website or portal, the awardee is responsible for submitting the quarterly data.

All training conducted should be reported to the COPS Office on a quarterly basis. Training delivered on the COPS Office Agency Portal will be reported by the portal administrator, which you should still review. The data to be reported should include the average pre- and post-test scores, average course effectiveness ratings, and average answers to course evaluation questions. It should also include general information on the course, instructors, participants, and overall course feedback. The COPS Office training tracker outlines all of the required fields. The quarterly due dates are as follows:

- **Quarter 1.** Collection period October 1–December 31. Due to the COPS Office by January 15.

- **Quarter 2.** Collection period January 1–March 31. Due to the COPS Office by April 15.

- **Quarter 3.** Collection period April 1–June 30. Due to the COPS Office by July 15.

- **Quarter 4.** Collection period July 1–September 30. Due to the COPS Office by October 15.

Training numbers and data should be kept readily available for information requests outside of the quarterly reporting period. At times, the COPS Office may request training data or numbers outside of the quarterly reporting period. Your program manager will inform you of changes to the reporting dates as needed.

Once you receive a COPS Office award that has a training deliverable, your organization will be added to the training tracker. The training tracker is currently located in your Agency Portal (https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/). Permissions can be given in your Agency Portal to those staff who will be entering the data into the training tracker. Quarterly training data cannot be accepted in spreadsheet or any other form for the official quarterly reporting. All training data submissions must comply with the quarterly reporting dates unless otherwise directed by your program manager.

Training data are submitted by the title of each course and the participants who successfully completed that course title within the reporting quarter. Within the training tracker, there are four possible training statuses: (1) projected, (2) in progress, (3) delivery submitted, and (4) no delivery to submit. The **projected**

status means that training is forthcoming; awardees can use this status to input all of their upcoming training. Once the training begins, the awardee can move the training to the **in progress** status, fill out all of the evaluation data, and submit the training occurrence. The **delivery submitted** status means that you have filled in all of the required sections and submitted a complete training occurrence. And **no delivery to submit** means that for the specified quarter, you did not deliver any training.

For all courses introduced on or after October 1, 2021, use the following formulation: For the "Course Effectiveness" input, take the average of the scores for the following questions:

- Overall, the course met my needs and expectations.

- Overall, the course is effective in meeting its outlined goals and objectives.

- Overall, this course was a valuable use of my time.

For all courses introduced before October 1, 2021, use the following formulation: For the "Course Effectiveness" input, take the average of the scores for the following questions:

- Overall, the course met my needs and expectations.

- Overall, the course is effective in meeting its outlined goals and objectives.

Please ensure you are not delinquent in submitting your quarterly training data. If you receive multiple delinquency notices, your award status will be flagged as noncompliant and official action will be taken.

Progress reports

Submit progress reports as outlined in your cooperative agreement. Progress reports should include summaries of progress on award deliverables such as technical assistance provided to students, marketing efforts, and training data for each online course (if not hosted on the COPS Training Portal), as well as any concerns noted by students.

The reporting system can be found via the agency portal, https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/.

Final summary report

For awardees hosting training on their own sites, within 90 days of the end of the award, submit a final summary report to the COPS Office program manager. At a minimum, this final report should include all training data, all course materials and resources, copies of marketing material, and summaries of all technical assistance provided. This final report is in addition to the final financial report and final programmatic progress report required by all training and non-training awardees. Your program manager can supply an example of a final training report if needed.

IV. Biennial Review

At a minimum, the COPS Office will review each course on a biennial basis. This review is in addition to the pilot of each course. The biennial review process is meant to ensure training remains current and to identify and help maintain successes, as well as to identify areas for improvement. If revisions are suggested based on the review, your program manager will outline the revision process.

V. Multiple Sponsorship

Some courses have more than one funding source or are fee-for-service. That is allowable; however, clear lines need to be drawn to distinguish which is which. All COPS Office–sponsored courses must follow the requirements in the COPS Office curriculum process guide and be prominently promoted as COPS Office–sponsored courses following all of the rules and requirements of that sponsorship. All non–COPS Office–sponsored courses should not be promoted as COPS Office courses. Do not report non–COPS Office–sponsored courses in your training data reports to the COPS Office, and do not use the COPS Office logos.

COPS Office courses are free courses for the field, so no fees should be associated with COPS Office courses.

Keep your COPS Office program manager up-to-date on which is which to prevent confusion.

The storyboards and functionality for COPS Office– and non–COPS Office–sponsored trainings might look the same, but the overarching difference is that the COPS Office cannot be stated to be a sponsor of the non–COPS Office–sponsored courses or deliveries.

VI. Post–COPS Office–Funded Training

At the end of the award, the awardee must submit all COPS Office–funded online course materials developed for the awardee's website to their program manager.

The COPS Office reserves the right to deliver/offer training even after the award for the training is complete. The COPS Office reserves royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the training in part or in whole for Federal Government purposes and to authorize others to use the training. The full outline of the right to use is detailed in every cooperative agreement and can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.315 (b)).

The awardee also has the right to continue the use of the developed training after the end of the award. Under the legal guidelines for deliverables post-award, the COPS Office logo should not be associated with the training after award funding has ended. Online training should not state that it is a COPS Office product but that "This training was developed through funding from the COPS Office in [funding year] and is currently being delivered through [state organization/agency]."

Development and Delivery of Pre-Existing Courses

I. Course Review and Marketing

The COPS Office will review and approve all pre-existing online courses prior to linking to, publicizing, or embedding them into the COPS Training Portal. Submit all pre-existing training materials to your COPS Office program manager for review and approval before scheduling or delivering training. This includes the storyboards, raw electronic course files, and the finalized electronic course. Review this section to make sure your materials include the appropriate information.

To ensure all requirements are met, arrange a time to talk with your COPS Office program manager on a monthly basis. Remember, your COPS Office program manager is here to help: Do not hesitate to reach out via email or phone.

Overarching requirements

The COPS Office has a series of requirements that apply to all courses in all stages of development, delivery, and online launch:

1. Ensure that all proposed deliverables and publications follow and are in accordance with the COPS Office Editorial and Graphics Style Manual (https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter?item=cops-w0434).

2. All products and deliverables (written, visual, or sound; curricula, reports, or websites) must contain the following statement:

   This project was supported by cooperative agreement number 15JCOPS-2#-GG-XXXXX-XXXX awarded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. References to specific agencies, companies, products, or services should not be considered an endorsement by the author(s) or the U.S. Department of Justice. Rather, the references are illustrations to supplement discussion of the issues. The Internet references cited in this publication were valid as of the date of this publication. Given that URLs and websites are in constant flux, neither the author(s) nor the COPS Office can vouch for their current validity.

3. When appropriate, U.S. Department of Justice publications and other products and deliverables should contain the following copyright notice:

   Copyright© [year work was published] [name of copyright owner]. The U.S. Department of Justice reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and authorize others to use, this resource for Federal Government purposes. This resource may be freely distributed and used for noncommercial and educational purposes only.

4. Ensure that the COPS Office online training portal formatting procedures are followed. The formatting procedures are available on the COPS Office website: https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Training_Portal_Formatting_Requirements.pdf.

5. All videos developed for online training curricula should follow the COPS Office video development guidelines (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Video Development ProcessGuide_2023.pdf).

6. If the online course includes supplemental materials such as a participant guide or resource packet, they should include a front, inside, and back cover developed with the COPS Office training templates. Templates are available on the COPS Office website: https://cops.usdoj.gov/training.

7. If materials or toolkits that accompany the training are developed and could be released as stand-alone resources, the full COPS Office publishing process should be followed.

8. If the course will include previously created printed course materials and resources, the COPS Office will review those materials and resources and provide guidance on editorial requirements.

9. All requirements and tasks outlined in each cooperative agreement must be followed in addition to the COPS Office Curriculum Standards, Review, and Approval Guide (https://cops.usdoj.gov/training).

10. All content must be free from discriminatory examples and terminology and negative stereotyping.

11. Grantees may be required to submit full source files for any course to the COPS Office or to the COPS Office Training Portal administrator.

12. All courses will be hosted on the COPS Training Portal servers and may not be connected to any other LMS without explicit written permission from the COPS Office. This requirement does not restrict the ability of a developer to separately host the course on their own LMS if allowed by their cooperative agreement.

COPS Office logos

The COPS Office has two logos for training documents: the training logo and the main COPS Office logo. All COPS Office–sponsored training materials should prominently display both logos. Contact your COPS Office program manager for logos if you need them in an image format. Supplemental materials to the training should also include the COPS Office logo, legal disclaimer, and, if necessary, the copyright notice. Awardees should not use the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) seal in conjunction with the COPS Office logos.

When placing the COPS Office logo and training logo on a colored background, please be careful of the color you choose, as the contrast can affect readability. To avoid visibility issues, make sure (1) the COPS logotype, (2) the red separator rule, and (3) the identifier and parent affiliate text are all clearly legible. Any alteration of the logo is a violation of usage standards because it creates inconsistency and confusion for readers and diminishes the integrity of our agency's identity.

For further assistance with logo usage, consult the *Graphic Standards and Identity System for the COPS Office* (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Logo_Standards_Manual.pdf) and Logo Fact Sheet (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Logo_Guideline_FactSheet.pdf) on the training section of the COPS Office website.

In addition to the aforementioned COPS Office logos, the Training Portal has a separate logo for its sole use.

508 conformance

Ensure that all electronic and information technology deliverables (websites and web-based information, online training, and video and multimedia products) are developed and produced in a format that is accessible according to accessibility requirements as specified in section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Specifically, video should contain closed-captioning and audio description options. Electronic publications should be created in HTML, fully tagged PDF, or accessible text file format, and all websites must be fully conformant with 508 accessibility standards. For more information on section 508 accessibility requirements, consult http://www.section508.gov/.

- It is important to note that under section 508, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information that is comparable to access available to others.

- If deliverables are not 508-conformant, they may not be published in print or online.

STEP 1. COURSE DISCUSSION

To start the course development process, you will participate in a course kickoff meeting with your COPS Office program manager. The purposes of this meeting are (1) to discuss the training cycle and (2) to ensure everyone agrees on the goals, objectives, target audience, and length of the course. The training cycle refers to the course's purpose and assessment, planning and preparation, presentation and facilitation, and evaluation and performance.

Your program manager will work with you to establish a date and time for this discussion. If subsequent discussions are needed prior to the development of the course design document, your program manager will inform you to not proceed with the course design document until all parties agree on the overall purpose of the course.

STEP 2. COURSE REVIEW

The COPS Office will review the pre-existing online course for content and functionality. The review will include, at a minimum, an internal COPS Office review, external peer review, and vetting. Your program manager will inform you of any modifications to the course after the COPS Office review.

Internal review

This is a COPS Office review of the course structure and content. The COPS Office will review the course to ensure it meets the COPS Office standards at a basic level before the course is approved to proceed to peer review. This process typically takes two weeks.

Peer review

Peer review is the process of experts (law enforcement, researchers, academics, etc.) from outside the COPS Office reviewing the entire course for relevance and applicability to the field. Most peer-reviewed documents have three reviewers. The review is confidential, so you will not know the names of those reviewing your course materials.

During their review of the course materials, the peer reviewers fill out a peer-review questionnaire and provide a rating for the course. When the reviewers are finished, your program manager will review their feedback and ratings and share them with you. Your program manager will ask you to make the recommended changes. If the reviewers recommended any changes that you decline to make, you will need to write a memo to your program manager outlining which changes you decline and your reasons. Your program manager will review this memo and enter it into the COPS Office review process, which could take up to two weeks. During this time, do not move forward on the course until you have your program manager's approval. The COPS Office may determine that you still need to make the changes. All memos related to this determination will be saved in your official award folder.

It takes four weeks for the peer reviewers to read the materials and provide comments. If changes need to be made to the course, they will be made after the review period. You will work with your COPS Office program manager to determine a time frame for completing the finalized draft course.

Vetting

Once the peer-reviewed, finalized storyboards are complete, your program manager will send the course through the DOJ vetting process. The purpose of vetting is for the DOJ to review the course for organizational conflicts of interest and any implied endorsements of products or services. Your program manager might ask you to send the course documents in a specific format for vetting. When vetting is finished, your program manager will review the vetting feedback and share it with you. Your program manager will ask you to make any recommended changes. If any changes are recommended that you decline to make, you will need to write a memo to your program manager outlining which changes you decline to make and your reasons. Your program manager will review the memo and enter it into the COPS Office review process, which could take up to two weeks. During this time, do not move forward on the course until you have your program manager's approval. The COPS Office may determine that you still need to make the changes. All memos related to this determination will be saved in your official award folder.

Vetting typically takes two to three weeks; it is unlikely that it will take less time, though depending on the length of the training it may take longer. Most vetting clears during the two- to three-week period with few to no changes identified. If changes do need to be made to the course, they will be made after the two- to three-week vetting period. You will work with your COPS Office program manager to determine a time frame for completing the finalized draft course.

Until approval to move onto the next step is given, no further steps should be taken to develop or market the course.

STEP 3. REVISIONS

Your program manager will notify you of any necessary revisions to the course. If revisions are suggested that you do not want to make, you should send a written justification for rejecting them to your program manager no later than 10 days after receipt of the revision request. Your program manager will review the justification and submit a final determination.

After receiving the revision request from your program manager, you should electronically submit the revised course to your program manager within 30 days.

A pilot to test the course is required after making revisions to any course. The pilot should not be scheduled until your program manager indicates approval of the revisions. Until approval is given, no further steps should be taken to deliver or market the course.

STEP 4. PILOT THE REVISED COURSE

The pilot is a first run through the course, designed to test the course content, functionality, and flow before the national launch. All courses, including asynchronous eLearning courses, require a pilot. Pilots should generally take place at a point in the development of the training that will allow the students to fully evaluate the course while maximizing the ability to make changes in a cost-effective manner. For example, where narration is required to complete the course, a computerized reading of the narration will suffice for a pilot. Do not schedule your pilot without approval from your COPS Office program manager (PM) to ensure that it takes place at the optimal point. Your PM will need to attend the pilot, either in person or virtually, and evaluate it. In general, it will be preferable for the pilot to be arranged to allow for the PM to attend in person.

Grantees shall follow the subsequent guidelines when arranging pilots; deviations from these guidelines will require approval from the COPS Office PM.

- A minimum of 10 outside attendees will be scheduled to take part in the pilot; it is preferable to schedule more than 10 to allow for unanticipated no-shows.

- Attendees should include the following:
  - Active law enforcement officers, constituting at least half of the scheduled attendees
  - Representatives of any other relevant stakeholder groups (e.g., prosecutors or co-responders)

- An explanation of the pilot process should be given to participants, including the following:
  - That the course is being piloted and that, depending on feedback, it may or may not be released in its current form
  - The intent behind the development of the course
  - A general description of what the developer/COPS Office want students to learn from the course
  - The process by which the pilot will take place, including how students will give feedback

- Students should complete all aspects of the course, including pre-test, post-test, and all modules, including interactive/scenario-based modules, that are expected to be a part of the course.

- Feedback should be solicited from all attendees on both positive and negative aspects of the course, with a focus on whether there are any "fatal flaws" that would prevent the COPS Office from releasing the training in its current form. Negative feedback should include suggestions on how to fix the identified problem whenever possible. Feedback will be solicited in the following forms:
  - Standard evaluation questions found on page 30 using a 1–5 Likert scale
  - Written short answer "additional feedback" question allowing the student to express general thoughts

– Group discussion, which should be moderated by either the COPS Office PM or a representative of the grantee developer, intended to elicit detailed feedback and assess whether there is general agreement over that feedback; detailed notes should be taken to ensure that all feedback is recorded to assist the grantee and PM in determining what, if any, changes should be made

In general, it is preferable to host pilots in person where all attendees can individually pilot the course; for example, in a computer lab at a Police Academy or university. However, awardees should be prepared to host the pilot virtually in situations where an in-person pilot is infeasible. Work with your COPS Office PM to determine the best method for the pilot.

The pilot feedback is reviewed by the COPS Office PM and discussed with the awardee to determine next steps. The awardee will provide a list of the identified or known major or minor flaws they plan to immediately address (like spelling, nonfunctional learning elements, or navigation issues). If there are additional requested updates identified by test participants—such as suggested wording, aesthetic, or content changes—these can be discussed with the COPS Office PM to be prioritized based on the need, impact on the budget, or timeline.

If there are high priority edits requested by the COPS Office beyond what was included in the approved storyboards, the awardee may be asked to provide estimated time and budget impacts of potential edits to aid in the decision-making of the COPS Office PM. The awardee and COPS Office PM will notify the awardee regarding the agreed-upon update list of updates (punch list). If a pilot finds that the course needs significant revisions to content or instructional style, your PM will provide you with a corrective action plan to ensure the course is successful.

Even once the agreed upon updates have been made, do not launch the final course until your PM gives the final approval.

Pilots for "hybrid" courses that involve both an asynchronous and instructor-led portion should generally follow the guidelines laid out in this document, but may require adjustments; work with your PM to determine what changes, if any, should be made.

In-person pilots of online courses

For in-person pilots of online courses, ensure that you notify the local U.S. Attorney's Office that a COPS Office–sponsored course will be taking place in their district. Your COPS Office PM can provide you with a list of contacts for U.S. Attorney Offices across the country. U.S. Attorneys' Offices can be great resources, especially for training space and marketing. They also like to know what DOJ training is being delivered in their area.

For in-person pilots of online courses, you will need to follow the DOJ cost reporting requirements. The DOJ requires all awardees delivering training (including pilots) to submit the Conference Cost Request/Reporting Form (CCR) prior to planning a training. For course delivery costing less than $100,000, the form must be submitted to your COPS Office PM at least 90 calendar days in advance of the delivery. For course delivery that costs more than $100,000, the form must be submitted at least 120 calendar days in advance of delivery. The COPS Office may consider late requests—at its sole discretion—but cannot ensure they will receive a decision in time for the training to proceed. Any cancellation costs incurred as a result of late submission may be determined to be unallowable.

Your PM will send you the CCR form and guidance, and you can find the FAQs on the training page of the COPS Office website. Once you have filled out the form, send it to your PM. Your PM will send it for processing and notify you when it is approved. Do not schedule or hold a pilot before approval is given.

For training that includes more than one pilot, it is recommended that for question #7 on the CCR, "Is this a blanket request?," you answer YES, and in question #8 fill out the number of deliveries, year, and locations and start and end dates if you know them. If you do not know the location or start or end dates, you can answer TBD. This will allow you to submit one request for all pilots in a year, so that you do not have to fill out individual forms for each pilot. For costs, input the estimated cost of your most expensive pilot.

Some training deliverables do not require CCR form submission. To determine which TA visits and or training deliverables do not require submission of the CCR form, review the following 10 questions. The COPS Office developed a checklist to alleviate some of the uncertainty regarding whether an event requires prior approval. If the answers to all 10 questions are "No," the event does not require prior approval via the CCR form submission process. It will still require approval from your PM.

1. Is the cost of the event greater than $20,000?

2. Are there meeting room costs?

3. Are audio-visual costs greater than $25 per attendee or more than $1,000 in total?

4. Are there any food and beverage costs?

5. Did the request for the meeting come from multiple jurisdictions or agencies?

6. Do the participants represent multiple agencies that are not co-located or joined by an agreement (e.g., task force with MOU)?

7. Are there trinkets being purchased?

8. Is there a formal published agenda?

9. Are formal discussions or presentation panels planned?

10. Are there logistical planning costs beyond incidental internal administrative costs necessary to arrange travel and lodging for a small number of individuals?

Please reference DOJ Grants Financial Guide: Section 3.10 OJP/COPS Office Conference Approval, Planning and Reporting: *No Prior Approval Required* https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/iii-postaward-requirements#0uxd2 for additional information and/or contact your PM directly.

STEP 5. FINAL COURSE

The final course should include any changes requested in response to the pilot. It should be electronically shared with your COPS Office program manager for a final quality check before launch. Once your program manager verifies the course is in a final state, you may initiate the course launch steps outlined here. Do not launch the course until your program manager confirms final approval.

Developers may provide a high-resolution logo image, which will be added to the course certificate if they choose.

For courses that will be hosted on the COPS Office Training Portal, this step will be performed by the training portal team.

As a quality check, your COPS Office program manager will arrange an in-house viewing session at the COPS Office prior to launching the course. Work with your program manager to ensure the course can be viewed by the COPS Office. It is not necessary for the course developers to be on-site for this viewing session, but there are instances where it is beneficial—discuss the possibility with your COPS Office program manager.

After the internal viewing, the course will move into the launch phase. Awardees hosting on their own websites or platforms need to ensure that the program manager is able to view the course on the platform before it is launched. For those awardees whose training will be hosted on the COPS Office Training Portal, the Training Portal team will test and launch the course on the COPS Office's own platform.

STEP 6. MARKETING

Develop and administer a marketing plan in collaboration with your COPS Office program manager. All marketing materials should prominently display the COPS Office logo and training logo and state that the training is supported by the COPS Office. You must submit initial marketing materials to your program manager for review and approval at least 30 days before you embark on email/website/flyer/etc. distribution. The approved materials will then become the approved template for your future marketing efforts. At a minimum, marketing materials should include a summary of the course content, information on who is eligible to take the course, and any student prerequisites. All marketing materials must also include this COPS Office disclaimer:

> This project was supported by cooperative agreement number 15JCOPS-2#-GG-XXXXX-XXXX awarded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

In marketing materials, do not use the DOJ seal or state that the opinions in the training materials are the opinions of the U.S. Department of Justice or COPS Office.

The COPS Office has a marketing fact sheet (https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Marketing_Guidelines_FactSheet.pdf) to help you easily navigate the dos and don'ts of marketing a COPS Office–sponsored course.

II. Public Course Launch

With approval from your program manager, the course can be launched publicly. If the course is hosted on your website, work with your program manager to include a summary of the course and a link to the COPS Office Training Portal. This will help direct more traffic to the course. Ensure that the course is fully functional, has continual maintenance, and supports users through technical assistance from the launch through the end of the award. If the course is hosted on the COPS Office Training Portal, work with your program manager to develop a summary and link for your own website; the training portal team will ensure functionality and maintenance and provide technical assistance.

III. Evaluation and Deliverable Reporting

All courses should include pre- and post-course assessments for participants, as well as an overall course evaluation administered at the completion of the course. All evaluations and assessments must use a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 equaling "strongly disagree" and 5 equaling "strongly agree." Open-ended discussion questions may also be included in evaluations and assessments.

Course evaluation questions

At a minimum, the course evaluation should include the following Likert scale questions:

- Before the course, I would rate my knowledge, skills, and abilities in this subject as advanced (5), intermediate (4), basic (3), little (2), none (1).

- After the course, I would rate my knowledge, skills, and abilities in this subject as advanced (5), intermediate (4), basic (3), little (2), none (1).

- The training objectives and outcomes for the course are explicitly stated and understandable.

- The course provided the knowledge and skills I need to accomplish the job for which I am receiving training.

- Materials are presented in realistic job scenarios that I can easily transfer to my job.

- Based on the training, I am fully capable of implementing the skills I learned.

- The course content is appropriate for someone within my professional field.

- The course content is appropriate for someone with my level of experience.

- Overall, the course met my needs and expectations.

- Overall, the course is effective in meeting its outlined goals and objectives.

- Overall, this course was a valuable use of my time.

- The training program is easy to access online.

- Interface design and navigation features are logical, consistent, and efficient throughout the course.

- The course directions are clear and easy to understand and explain how to proceed through the course.

- I was able to save work, exit the program, come back to the program at a later time, and start working where I left off.

- I was able to control the speed at which I took the course and could replay or review material previously accessed.

For those courses that are community- or workshop-based or whose audience is young people, your program manager will discuss the evaluation questions with you, as these questions might not all be suitable for the audience.

Monthly training summary report

For courses hosted on the COPS Training Portal, the COPS Training Portal team will fulfill the monthly training summary report requirement.

For courses hosted on the awardee's website or portal, the awardee is responsible for developing a monthly summary report. At a minimum, these reports should include the number of participants who have taken the course, the ranks or position titles of the participants, participant agency names, and Level I and Level II evaluation results. The monthly training summary report should be submitted to your program manager by the fifth of the month following each reporting month.

Quarterly training data collection and submission

For courses hosted on the COPS Training Portal, the Training Portal team will fulfill the quarterly reporting requirement. For courses hosted on the awardee's website or portal, the awardee is responsible for submitting the quarterly data.

All training conducted should be reported to the COPS Office on a quarterly basis. The data to be reported should include the average pre- and post-test scores, average course effectiveness ratings, and average answers to course evaluation questions. It should also include general information on the course, instructors, participants, and overall course feedback. The COPS Office training tracker outlines all of the required fields. The quarterly due dates are as follows:

- Quarter 1. Collection period October 1–December 31. Due to the COPS Office by January 15.

- Quarter 2. Collection period January 1–March 31. Due to the COPS Office by April 15.

- Quarter 3. Collection period April 1–June 30. Due to the COPS Office by July 15.

- Quarter 4. Collection period July 1–September 30. Due to the COPS Office by October 15.

Training numbers and data should be kept readily available for information requests outside of the quarterly reporting period. At times, the COPS Office may request training data or numbers outside of the quarterly reporting period. Your program manager will inform you of changes to the reporting dates as needed.

Once you receive a COPS Office award that has a training deliverable, your organization will be added to the training tracker. You will find the training tracker located in your Agency Portal (accessed via the COPS Office website). Permissions can be given in your Agency Portal to those staff who will be entering the data into the training tracker. Quarterly training data cannot be accepted in spreadsheet or any other form for the official quarterly reporting. All training data submissions must comply with the quarterly reporting dates unless otherwise directed by your program manager.

Training data are submitted by the title of each course and the participants who successfully completed that course title within the reporting quarter. Within the training tracker, there are four possible training statuses: (1) projected, (2) in progress, (3) delivery submitted, and (4) no delivery to submit. The **projected** status means that training is forthcoming; awardees can use this status to input all of their upcoming

training. Once the training begins, the awardee can move the training to the **in progress** status, fill out all of the evaluation data, and submit the training occurrence. The **delivery submitted** status means that you have filled in all of the required sections and submitted a complete training occurrence. And **no delivery to submit** means that for the specified quarter, you did not deliver any training.

For all courses introduced on or after October 1, 2021, use the following formulation: For the "Course Effectiveness" input, take the average of the scores for the following questions:

- Overall, the course met my needs and expectations.

- Overall, the course is effective in meeting its outlined goals and objectives.

- Overall, this course was a valuable use of my time.

For all courses introduced before October 1, 2021, use the following formulation: For the "Course Effectiveness" input, take the average of the scores for the following questions:

- Overall, the course met my needs and expectations.

- Overall, the course is effective in meeting its outlined goals and objectives.

Please ensure you are not delinquent in submitting your quarterly training data. If you receive multiple delinquency notices, your award status will be flagged as noncompliant and official action will be taken.

Progress reports

Submit progress reports as outlined in your cooperative agreement. Progress reports should include summaries of progress on award deliverables such as technical assistance provided to students, marketing efforts, and training data for each online course (if not hosted on the COPS Training Portal), as well as any concerns noted by students.

The reporting system can be found via the agency portal, https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/.

Final summary report

For awardees hosting training on their own site, upon completion of the award, submit a final summary report to the COPS Office within 90 days of the end of the award that includes, at a minimum, all training data, all course materials and resources, copies of marketing material, and summaries of technical assistance provided. This final report is in addition to the final financial report and final programmatic progress report required by all training and non-training awardees. Your program manager can supply an example of a final training report if needed.

IV. Biennial Review

At a minimum, the COPS Office will review each course on a biennial basis. This review is in addition to the pilot of each course. The biennial review process is meant to ensure training remains current and to identify and help maintain successes, as well as to identify areas for improvement. If revisions are suggested based on the review, your program manager will outline the revision process.

V. Multiple Sponsorship

Some courses have more than one funding source or are fee-for-service. That is allowable; however, clear lines need to be drawn to distinguish which is which. All COPS Office–sponsored courses must follow the requirements in the COPS Office curriculum process guide and be prominently promoted as COPS Office–sponsored courses following all of the rules and requirements of that sponsorship. All non–COPS Office–sponsored courses should not be promoted as COPS Office courses. Do not report non–COPS Office–sponsored courses in your training data reports to the COPS Office, and do not use the COPS Office logos.

COPS Office courses are free for the field, so no fees should be associated with COPS Office courses.

Keep your COPS Office program manager up to date on which is which to prevent confusion.

The storyboards and functionality for COPS Office– and non-COPS Office–sponsored trainings might look the same, but the overarching difference is that the COPS Office cannot be stated to be a sponsor of the non-COPS Office-sponsored course deliveries.

VI. Post–COPS Office–Funded Training

At the end of the award, the awardee must submit all COPS Office–funded online course materials developed for the awardee's website to their program manager.

The COPS Office reserves the right to deliver/offer training even after the funding source for the training is complete. The COPS Office reserves royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the training in part or in whole for Federal Government purposes and to authorize others to use the training. The full outline of the right to use is detailed in every cooperative agreement and can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200.315 (b)).

The awardee also has the right to continue the use of the developed training after the end of the award. Under the legal guidelines for deliverables post-award, the COPS Office logo should not be associated with the training after award funding has ended. Online training should not state that it is a COPS Office product but that, "This training was developed through funding from the COPS Office in [funding year] and is currently being delivered through [state organization/agency]."

For pre-existing courses, please consult with your COPS Office program manager regarding the COPS Office's right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the training for Federal Government purposes through the royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license. There are some instances where this does not apply: for example, a course that was developed without COPS Office funding and for which COPS Office paid only for course delivery.