COPS
Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

Fact Sheet

cops.usdoj.gov

Training Fact Sheet

The COPS Office has a series of requirements for the development and delivery of in-person and online training. These requirements can be found in the two COPS Office curriculum guides: (1) Online Curriculum Standards and Review: Process Guide at https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Online_Curriculum_Process_Guide.pdf and (2) In-Person Curriculum Standards and Review: Process Guide at https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/In_Person_Curriculum_Standards_Guide.pdf. The guides were established to provide guidance to COPS Office training providers and program managers on instructional design, promising practices, and the process by which the COPS Office will review and approve curricula. The curriculum guides are subject to change, and developers should consult them regularly; COPS Office program managers will also make efforts to ensure that changes are reported to developers in a timely manner.

The COPS Office trainings are national in scope and should have a specific law enforcement audience: executives, first-line supervisors, line officers, dispatchers, joint community and officers, etc. COPS Office training supports the needs of the law enforcement field and strives to increase public safety.

The training goals of the COPS Office are as follows:

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

- Manage quality control through a series of review and approval checkpoints.

- Standardize content, style, format, and quality.

- Establish clear outcome expectations of training initiatives.

- Maintain training relevance for the field.

- As appropriate, prepare training for accreditation through national law enforcement training accreditation programs.

The COPS Office defines training as the teaching and learning activities carried out for the primary purpose of helping 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; it is not a single event but rather an ongoing process that requires continuous 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 whereby trainees critically analyze the training materials and test 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-training testing and a final course evaluation to ensure those goals are met. If a course meets all other standards but lacks a pre- and post-training testing mechanism, it is considered a 'resource,' rather than a training. A resource should only be developed in lieu of a training if required by the solicitation or upon approval from the COPS Office.

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

The COPS Office also has a series of requirements that instructors must meet prior to becoming instructors for COPS Office courses and for the duration of their instructor tenure. Those requirements can be found in the COPS Office's Instructor Quality Assurance Guide at https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/training/Instructor_Quality_Assurance_Guide.pdf.

Online trainings can be found on the COPS Office Training Portal at https://copstrainingportal.org.

Contact the COPS Office

For questions related to the development and delivery of in-person or online training or for more information about COPS Office programs and resources, please call the COPS Office Response Center at 800-421-6770 or visit the COPS Office website at https://cops.usdoj.gov.