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CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM: AN OVERVIEW OF ONLINE TRAINING OPTIONS



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BACKGROUND

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federally funded food assistance program through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Targeting benefits to children at risk for food insecurity and poor diet, CACFP reimburses participating child care facilities at free, reduced-price, or paid rates depending on the enrolled children's family income. Foods provided to children in CACFP-participating programs must meet nutrition standards in order to be reimbursed. CACFP participation has been associated with higher dietary quality of meals served and improved children's dietary intake. The CACFP nutrition standards are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which encourage a diet that includes a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and limits added sugar and saturated fats.



State agencies that administer CACFP are required by federal regulations¹ to dedicate consultative, technical, and managerial personnel to provide sufficient training and technical assistance to CACFP providers. The training and technical assistance offered by state agencies typically includes, but is not limited to, preapproval training for prospective CACFP providers,² annual training that covers civil rights compliance and additional topics that change each year based upon new regulations and common administrative review findings, and training for staff of CACFP providers that comprises civil rights compliance along with other relevant training based on job duties.

1. 7 CFR, 226.6(a)(2)

2. Topics include: Civil Rights Compliance, Enrollment, Facility Reviews, Financial Management and Fiscal Accountability, Food Safety and Sanitation, Meal Counting and Claiming, Meal Requirements and Menu Documentation, Policies and Procedures required for the CACFP, Procurement Procedures, Recordkeeping Requirements, Reimbursement Requirements, and Training Requirements..

The design and execution of multiple in-person trainings requires a significant amount of time and effort by the state agency CACFP staff. Online training offers state agencies the ability to provide trainings virtually and/or through online modules, potentially reaching a much wider audience. Online training also saves providers time and resources, which could increase program compliance and reduce barriers to participation. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has only intensified the need for state agencies to diversify their training options and provide safe and easily accessible online options.

METHODS

Between February- April 2020, Rudd Center researchers conducted a comprehensive screening of online training options listed on the CACFP state agency websites for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. In August 2020, researchers performed a follow-up screening of state agency websites and recorded updates to online training options due to the COVID-19 pandemic (See Appendix 1 for screening results).

Using the findings from the initial screening, during July-August 2020, the Center conducted phone or video conference meetings and/or corresponded via email with 12 state agencies administering CACFP, two external vendors on online training, and the National CACFP Sponsors Association. The results of these interviews and online search of the state agency websites are summarized below.



KEY FINDINGS

1. CACFP online training is widespread and growing—at least 44 states provided some type of CACFP training online as of summer 2020. Most states have developed online training within the last five years for child care centers and CACFP sponsoring organizations. At least 13 states have implemented online training following the COVID-19 pandemic. The types of trainings offered varied widely across states, ranging from civil rights, financial management, and meal claiming to only nutrition related topics. At the time of our review, very few state agencies (9%) provided online training in multiple languages. There were fourteen state agencies that provided linkages to professional development credits and/or licensing requirements.

2. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to CACFP online training. States are using a variety of approaches to offer CACFP online training. Many states have developed their own in-house options for training that may include both synchronous (i.e., live webinars) and asynchronous options where CACFP providers can log into an online system and learn at their own pace.

For synchronous CACFP training, states offer live webinars hosted through proprietary software, such as GoToWebinar, Zoom, or GoToMeeting. Some state agencies record trainings and post for future viewing, typically in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, PDF, or a webinar recording.

For in-house asynchronous training, states are using two types of technology: an Authoring Application to create content (e.g., Adobe Captivate, Articulate, Lectora, Camtasia, Adobe Connect) and a Learning Management System (LMS) to host the content online and provide tracking and analytics. LMSs used by states to provide CACFP online training include Blackboard, Canvas, and Moodle; not all states use a LMS to track online training participation, some use a state proprietary training website, SurveyMonkey, Google sheets, or printed certificates.

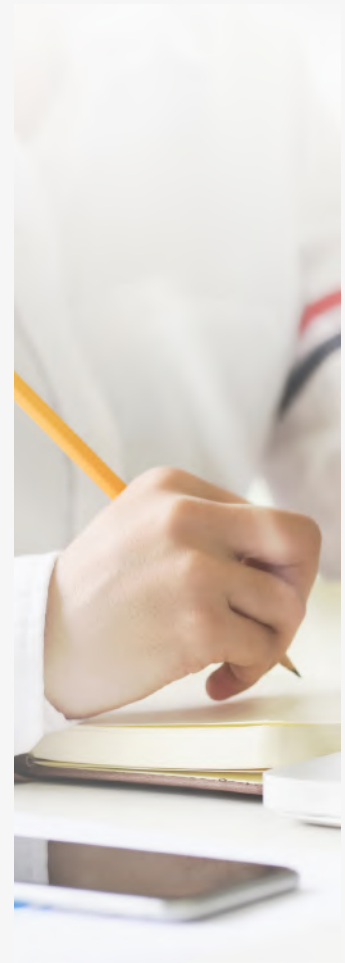
Our findings revealed only one external vendor, Brighton Training Group (BTG) to offer an asynchronous online training platform for non-nutrition related CACFP topics. There are a whole range of trainings and customization that states can choose from. As of summer 2020, ten states used BTG for online training (Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Wyoming, Michigan). In addition, Brighton Training Group offers technical assistance for CACFP providers utilizing the online training platform.

3. There are costs associated with providing online training.

In-house online training typically requires annual software license fees and one-time costs for the purchase of equipment (microphone, screen recording and video editing software, etc.). Brighton Training Group offers a full range of customizable trainings and annual costs vary based on the suite of trainings chosen by the state (from \$12K/year -\$195K/year in 2020).

Both the in-house and external vendor training options require staff time to create and modify content, while in-house options require the additional cost of training state agency staff in new technologies and the provision of technical assistance to end users.

States interviewed for this project reported using a few mechanisms to fund online training, including the USDA Professional Standards Training Grant for the initial development; the CACFP Meal Service Training Grant as a short-term funding source (permission needed from USDA); and State Administrative Expense (SAE) Reallocation Funds for smaller CACFP trainings.





CONCLUSION

The response to CACFP online training by state agency staff interviewed for this project was overwhelmingly positive. There were no state agencies that cautioned against providing online training for CACFP providers. In addition, one of the states interviewed mentioned a decrease in findings, a decrease in disallowances, and a decrease in seriously deficient determinations after the implementation of online training.

CACFP provides critical nutrition support for children in child care settings, and COVID-19 has only intensified the need for delivering healthy food to young children. At a time when access to healthy food is paramount, online training provides easily accessible training options to child care providers and a solution to in-person training for state agencies administering CACFP.

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APPENDIX A: CACFP ADMINISTRATION & PARTICIPATION

STATE	AGENCY ADMINISTERING CACFP	CACFP WEBSITE	CACFP DAILY ATTENDANCE, 2019 (USDA)
Alabama	Alabama State Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3jADaxp	68,982
Alaska	Alaska Department of Education and Early Development	https://bit.ly/36Y17cU	9,124
Arizona	Arizona Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3p9MSYx	40,856
Arkansas	Arkansas Department of Human Services	https://bit.ly/2Lzb3ly	55,660
California	California Department of Education	https://bit.ly/2MTvzOp	626,057
Colorado	Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment	https://bit.ly/2Z3DLhv	42,400
Connecticut	Connecticut Department of Education	http://bit.ly/3jxcX2P	24,613
District of Columbia	Office of the Superintendent of Education	https://bit.ly/3rEh4wQ	30,598

STATE	AGENCY ADMINISTERING CACFP	CACFP WEBSITE	CACFP DAILY ATTENDANCE, 2019 (USDA)
Delaware	Delaware Department of Education	https://bit.ly/2YZ3XtB	36,728
Florida	Florida Public Health, Bureau of Child Care Food Programs	https://bit.ly/2NcFTAO	314,925
Georgia	Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning	https://bit.ly/3aJTJ60	153,933
Hawaii	State of Hawaii, Department of Education	https://bit.ly/2Z3DXNL	10,671
Idaho	Idaho State Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3jBgrB6	11,709
Illinois	Illinois State Board of Education	http://bit.ly/2Z3yEOM	139,246
Indiana	Indiana Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3tK6x4U	99,801
Iowa	Iowa Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3cWp2x7	42,130
Kansas	Kansas State Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3p4YTie	48,526

STATE	AGENCY ADMINISTERING CACFP	CACFP WEBSITE	CACFP DAILY ATTENDANCE, 2019 (USDA)
Kentucky	Kentucky Department of Education	https://bit.ly/2LGzwWk	82,480
Louisiana	Louisiana Department of Education	https://bit.ly/2LEKFXE	90,988
Maine	Maine Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3aOEfxE	11,568
Maryland	Maryland State Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3jx5fWr	94,678
Massachusetts	Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education	https://bit.ly/3p5G3Y3	77,921
Michigan	Michigan Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3tKSj3E	72,709
Minnesota	Minnesota Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3cTgpn7	104,025
Mississippi	Mississippi Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3a4RsDd	52,024
Missouri	Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services	https://bit.ly/3a2m3Bw	87,863
Montana	Department of Public Health and Human Services	https://bit.ly/3q7MLhs	11,982

STATE	AGENCY ADMINISTERING CACFP	CACFP WEBSITE	CACFP DAILY ATTENDANCE, 2019 (USDA)
Nebraska	Nebraska Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3q7MLhs	38,389
Nevada	Nevada Department of Agriculture	https://bit.ly/2LBAQK3	21,262
New Hampshire	New Hampshire Department of Education (website being updated)	https://bit.ly/3a9DdgJ	10,969
New Jersey	New Jersey Department of Agriculture	https://bit.ly/3rEhq6E	97,071
New Mexico	New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department	https://bit.ly/3aOmUF9	35,923
New York	New York State Department of Health	https://on.ny.gov/2LyAhAu	306,740
North Carolina	North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services	https://bit.ly/3a5AB3q	132,533
North Dakota	North Dakota Department of Public Instruction	https://bit.ly/3rHA7GD	15,935
Ohio	Ohio Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3qce5eQ	118,162

STATE	AGENCY ADMINISTERING CACFP	CACFP WEBSITE	CACFP DAILY ATTENDANCE, 2019 (USDA)
Oklahoma*	Oklahoma State Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3rCQrZc	63,275
Oregon	Oregon Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3a4RLOn	47,766
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3rCkJer	153,967
Rhode Island	Rhode Island Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3g7ya5J	12,210
South Carolina	South Carolina Department of Social Services, Early Care, & Education	https://bit.ly/36XFkIG	51,863
South Dakota	South Dakota Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3p54LIb	15,035
Tennessee	Tennessee Department of Human Services	https://bit.ly/3aNrOx6	87,704
Texas	Texas Department of Agriculture	https://bit.ly/36VI0QQ	795,231
Utah	Utah State Board of Education	https://bit.ly/3d1d3yj	32,742

STATE	AGENCY ADMINISTERING CACFP	CACFP WEBSITE	CACFP DAILY ATTENDANCE, 2019 (USDA)
Vermont	State of Vermont, Agency of Education	https://bit.ly/36YOdeK	11,870
Virginia	Virginia Department of Health	https://bit.ly/3a4DWj1	118,224
Washington	Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	https://bit.ly/2Z1VFBY	78,789
West Virginia	West Virginia Department of Education	https://bit.ly/3tL7mdJ	23,994
Wisconsin	Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction	https://bit.ly/2YZyORU	58,783
Wyoming	Wyoming Department of Education	http://bit.ly/2MNqd7i	6,865

*Newly offering online training based on Aug. 2020 review

APPENDIX B: CACFP ONLINE TRAINING

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Alabama	PPT/PDF	Administrative Review, Civil Rights, Enrollment & Participation, Financial Aspects of CACFP, Monitoring, Nutrition Education	In-house	https://bit.ly/3aYwISy
Alaska	Asynchronous learning platform through DEED eLearning (Alaska's Dept. of Ed and Early Development online training platform) and annual training via webinar	Administration Basics, Meal Pattern Basics, Participant Enrollment and Income Eligibility, Infant Feeding, CACFP Family Style Dining, Civil Rights, and Procurement	In-house	http://bit.ly/2Neo4Bw
Arizona	Narrated PPTs with online survey and certificate	Introduction to CACFP, Civil Rights, Various trainings related to application assistance	In-house	http://bit.ly/3dJjoJZ
Arkansas*	PPT/PDF and videos	CACFP Refresher Online Training	In-house	http://bit.ly/3p9YJCj
California*	Asynchronous learning platform and webinars	Nutrition, Operations, and Administration trainings	In-house	http://bit.ly/3d0ZoHq

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Colorado	Asynchronous learning platform through COTrain (Colorado Train), and a few videos and materials	5-part series that counts towards CACFP training requirement for participating institutions. Serves as alternate to in-person training, and provides training for staff of current sponsors and for potential new sponsors.	In-house	http://bit.ly/3jChUXX
Connecticut	None	None	N/A	
District of Columbia*	PPT/PDF, Asynchronous learning platform and recordings of virtual town halls	Civil Rights, Performance standards: Institution Responsibilities, Financial Management, Procurement	N/A	http://bit.ly/3a5g7rp
Delaware	Asynchronous learning platform	Multiple CACFP trainings	Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group in partnership with University of DE	http://bit.ly/374ayr8

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Florida	Narrated PPT w/certificate	Record keeping and Claiming Training Module for Centers; Online Change Request Process for Centers	In-house	http://bit.ly/2Z6xWAa
Georgia	Asynchronous learning platform through GA ATLAS and recorded webinars	Annual Training is web-based; Training on specialized topics is offered face-to-face, via interactive webinar, or web-based; Recorded webinars are available online	In-house	http://bit.ly/372mBoT
Hawaii	Asynchronous learning platform	Annual Training, New Sponsor Training, Civil Rights, and Performance Standards covering: Financial Management and Viability, Administrative Capability, and Program Accountability	N/A	http://bit.ly/3a5g7rp
Idaho*	Live and recorded webinars	Procurement, Administrative, Civil Rights, Food Safety, and annual CACFP training	In-house	http://bit.ly/3d0ZoHq

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Illinois	Live and recorded webinars	Application process and required procedures for new institutions; may also used as refresher training for CACFP participating orgs	In-house	http://bit.ly/3b7U2YH
Indiana	Asynchronous learning platform	New Sponsor Training, Annual Sponsor Training, Civil Rights Training, Meal Patterns, Annual Financial reporting, menu and crediting, and performance standards.	Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	http://bit.ly/2MVLcoH
Iowa	Asynchronous learning platform through Iowa Learning Online Professional Development	Steps to CACFP Success workshop (basic training), Meal Patterns, and Nutrition and Physical Activity trainings	In-house	http://bit.ly/2Z7hIMm
Kansas	None	None	N/A	http://bit.ly/3qaAusT
Kentucky	None	None	N/A	http://bit.ly/3gd50SI

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Louisiana*	PDF/PPT	Meal Patterns, CACFP Training Module, Health and Safety resources	In-house	http://bit.ly/3rMqkPD
Maine*	PDF/PP and live and recorded webinars	Introduction to Child Nutrition Programs, Recordkeeping, Back to Basics, Meal Patterns, Civil Rights, Procurement, and Certification	Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	http://bit.ly/2MVLcoH
Maryland	Videos	Benefits of CACFP for new orgs. or agencies onboarding new staff, CACFP Meal Patterns, CACFP Mealtime Environment, Standardized Recipes	In-house	http://bit.ly/3aRARCf
Massachusetts	Webinars	Basics, Review and Updates, Menus, Culinary Skills, 4 week Professional Development course	N/A	http://bit.ly/3qbBf4N

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Michigan	Asynchronous learning platform and videos and webinars	CACFP Program Overview, Civil Rights, Procurement, Updated Meal Patterns, Infant Meal Pattern and Recordkeeping	In-house (videos and webinars); Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group (web-based)	http://bit.ly/2MWNcRl
Minnesota	Asynchronous learning platform and videos	Nutrition Basics for Better CACFP Menus, A CACFP Meal Pattern Guide, All Aboard the Whole Grain Express, Food Preparation Techniques and CACFP Menu Planning	In-house (videos); Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group (web-based)	http://bit.ly/2LES2hN
Mississippi*	PDF/PPT	New Center Training, New Sponsor Training, CACFP Update Training	In-house	http://bit.ly/3jFxu5o
Missouri	Asynchronous learning platform	Civil Rights, CACFP Meal Pattern, Infant Feeding Meal Pattern	In-house	http://adobe.ly/3d3JMTE
Montana	PPT/PDF	Center Director Training, Civil Rights, Sponsor Training, Staff Training	In-house	http://bit.ly/3p7KPo5

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Nebraska	Asynchronous learning platform, PPT/PDF, webinars	CACFP Recordkeeping, Menu Requirements and Infant Feeding	In-house	http://bit.ly/3q8zWnn
Nevada	PPT/PDF	CACFP Child Care Center Staff Training Child and Infant Meal Requirements, Mandatory Renewal Training	N/A	https://bit.ly/2Z6Vogp
New Hampshire*	Asynchronous learning platform	Supporting Good Nutrition, Eligibility, Meal Pattern, Getting started with CACFP	In-house	http://bit.ly/2MMkK0m
New Jersey	Webinars	Introduction to CACFP, Eligible Meals, Infant Meal Pattern, Menu Planning, and Meal Service, Meal Benefits and Recordkeeping Requirements, Monitoring Requirements	In-house	http://bit.ly/2MMkK0m
New Mexico	None	None	N/A	
New York	None	None	N/A	

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
North Carolina	Webinars: recorded and live (in-person trainings changed to live webinars due to COVID-19)	Duties and Documents for Independent Centers, Duties and Documents for Sponsoring Orgs., Get Started with CACFP for Independent Centers, Get Started with CACFP for Sponsoring Orgs.	In-house	http://bit.ly/3d4qOMH
North Dakota*	Asynchronous learning platform	Basics, Nutrition, Best Practices, Personal Hygiene, Sanitation	Outside Vendor	http://bit.ly/3qfA8RS
Ohio	Asynchronous learning platform	Performance Standards for CACFP, Annual Sponsor Training, Civil Rights, New Sponsor Training	Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	http://bit.ly/2Z5ebcg
Oklahoma*	PPT/PDF, Live and recorded webinars	Special Diets, Food Buying, Civil Rights, Accommodating Children with Disabilities, Nutrition	In-house	http://bit.ly/3galvPE

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Oregon	Recorded videos of narrated PPTs, separated by chapters	Policy & Procedure Manual Training for Center Sponsors, FDCH Administration, Civil Rights, Meal Pattern, Meal Planning, Procurement, and Knife Skills	In-house	http://bit.ly/3aWrEZ4
Pennsylvania	Asynchronous learning platform	Annual Training, New Sponsor Training, Civil Rights, and Performance Standards covering: Financial Management and Viability, Administrative Capability, and Program Accountability, Hearing Officer Training, and many more. 23 certificate course and 8 modules in all	Outside Vendor	http://bit.ly/3qfA8RS
Rhode Island	Recorded webinars & web-based & interactive	Annual renewal, Meal patterns, General CACFP	In-house	http://bit.ly/3p284Qo

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
South Carolina	None	None	N/A	http://bit.ly/3ryoCkG
South Dakota	PPT/PDF, Recorded webinars and training quizzes via SurveyMonkey	Civil rights, CACFP Meal Pattern, Infant Feeding Meal Pattern, Creditable foods, Meal counting, Monitoring requirement, Production records, Record keeping, Whole grains	N/A	https://bit.ly/2NayodQ
Tennessee	PPT/PDF	Civil rights, CACFP Free & Reduced Price meals, Family Day Care Homes Policy & Procedures	In-house	
Texas	Videos	Updated Meal Patterns, Budget Basics, Intro. to CACFP for Centers & Sponsoring orgs.	In-house	http://bit.ly/372qdHt
Utah	Asynchronous learning platform	Annual Training, New Sponsor training, Civil Rights, and many more	In-house	http://bit.ly/3rE9a6y
Vermont*	Videos	Civil Rights	N/A	http://bit.ly/2Z2O1qe

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Virginia	Asynchronous learning platform and webinars	Infant Meal Pattern, Child Meal Pattern, Civil Rights, Procurement Standards, Corrective Action Plans	In-house through GoTo Webinar; Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	https://bit.ly/3aapJkN
Washington	Videos	Civil Rights, Infant Meals, and Previous Annual Trainings	In-house through GoTo Webinar; Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	https://bit.ly/3a5SBdI
West Virginia	Asynchronous learning platform	Civil Rights	Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	https://bit.ly/3tI7ue6
Wisconsin	Webcasts	Meal Pattern, Production Records, Meal Counts, Financial Reporting, Civil Rights, CACFP Claims, & Meal Service	In-house	https://bit.ly/3rHnWcJ

STATE	TYPE (S) OF ONLINE TRAINING	ONLINE TRAINING CONTENT	OUTSIDE VENDOR OR IN-HOUSE	ONLINE TRAINING WEBPAGE
Wyoming	Asynchronous learning platform	Annual training, New sponsor training, Civil rights, and Performance Standards covering: Financial Management and Viability, Administrative Capability, and Program Accountability, Hearing Officer Training	Outside Vendor, Brighton Training Group	http://bit.ly/3jz3WWY

*Newly offering online training based on Aug. 2020 review