Service Delivery Administration Standards

Training and Supervision

Purpose

The organization supports personnel and promotes personnel competence, satisfaction, and retention by providing initial and ongoing training; a variety of personnel development opportunities; and regular, supportive supervision.

Introduction

COA's Training and Supervision (TS) standards focus on ensuring personnel have the competencies, support, and continuous learning opportunities they need to fulfill their roles at the organization and effectively meet the needs of the individuals and families they serve.

Personnel competence is the product of a dynamic combination of factors including experience, formal education, training, coaching, peer support, mentoring, and supportive supervision. As such, COA's TS standards reflect a multi-faceted approach to personnel development and supervision that enhances supervisors' abilities to respond to the individual needs of their workers while simultaneously promoting personnel competence, satisfaction, and retention across the organization.

Note: *COA's Training and Supervision (TS) standards do not apply to independent contractors.*

Note: *Please see the TS Reference List for the research that informed the development of these standards.*

Note: *For information about changes made in the 2020 edition, please see the TS Crosswalk.*

Table of Evidence

Self Study Evidence

No Self Study Evidence

Training and Supervision

TS 1: Personnel Development

Purpose

The organization supports personnel and promotes personnel competence, satisfaction, and retention by providing initial and ongoing training; a variety of personnel development opportunities; and regular, supportive supervision.

The organization supports effective service delivery through a structured personnel development program that provides personnel with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to achieve positive outcomes for persons served.
Examples: *Professional development programs can include:*

1. *direct supervision;*
2. *formal, internal personnel training;*
3. *internal and external conferences and workshops;*
4. *encouraging personnel to join and participate in professional organizations;*
5. *helping personnel to identify training and educational experiences that are credit bearing; and*
6. *offering tuition reimbursement, financial assistance, or time off.*

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices fully meet the standard as indicated by full implementation of the practices outlined in the TS 1 Practice standards.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement as noted in the ratings for the TS 1 Practice standards.

3 Practice requires significant improvement as noted in the ratings for the TS 1 Practice standards.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all, as noted in the ratings for the TS 1 Practice standards.

Table of Evidence

Self Study Evidence

*	• Annual training and development plan	
*	• Annual assessment of training needs	
*	• Table of contents of orientation curriculum	
*	• Procedures for evaluating training effectiveness	

Site Visit Evidence

*	• Documentation tracking staff completion of orientation • Training curricula • Results of evaluation for training effectiveness

On-Site Activities

*	• Interviews may include:

1. HR Director
2. Relevant personnel

TS 1.01 (FP)

A personnel development plan:

a. is reviewed annually and revised in accord with an assessment of the organization's training needs;
b. incorporates a variety of educational methods;
c. is responsive to the history, cultural backgrounds, and related needs of personnel;
d. outlines specific competency expectations for each job category;
e. provides opportunities for personnel to fulfill the continuing education requirements of their respective professions;
f. provides opportunities to support advancement within the organization and profession; and
g. provides opportunities for personnel to practice cultural humility.

Examples: *Educational methods can include, but are not limited to:*

1. *interactive classroom trainings;*
2. *webinars, self-paced trainings, or other computer-assisted training models;*
3. *coaching; and*
4. *structured peer support opportunities.*

Examples: *Examples of opportunities for personnel to practice cultural humility can include:*

1. *lunch-and-learns, webinars, or lectures;*
2. *facilitated conversations;*
3. *employee resource groups; and*
4. *resource sharing.*

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g.,
- One of the standard's elements is not fully addressed.

3 Practice requires significant improvement; e.g.,
- Two elements are not fully addressed; or
- One of the elements is not addressed at all.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 1.02

New personnel are oriented within the first three months of hire to the organization's mission, philosophy, goals, and services.

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g.,
- Occasionally orientation extends beyond the three months.

3 Practice requires significant improvement; e.g.,

- The curriculum is not well developed or lacks depth; or
- A significant number of staff have not been oriented.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 1.03

The organization evaluates the effectiveness of its training activities and makes needed improvements.
Examples: *Examples of ways to demonstrate implementation of this standard include, but are not limited to:*

1. *surveying personnel to assess satisfaction with a training activity and perceived competence;*
2. *implementing pre- and post-testing to assess skill acquisition, including practitioner observation where appropriate;*
3. *tracking performance data over time to identify trends and make improvements to training activities; and*
4. *conducting more complex analysis to assess the impact of training on positive outcomes.*

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement.

3 Practice requires significant improvement.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

Training and Supervision

TS 2: Training Content

Purpose

The organization supports personnel and promotes personnel competence, satisfaction, and retention by providing initial and ongoing training; a variety of personnel development opportunities; and regular, supportive supervision.

Personnel are prepared to fulfill their job responsibilities.
Interpretation: *Standards in TS S 2 should be applied to independent contractors based on their role and the competencies stipulated in their contract. While organizations typically would not provide training to contractors directly, they should maintain documentation from contractors that demonstrates their competency in applicable areas. Competency can be demonstrated through education, training, experience, degree requirements, certifications, licenses, and pursuit of CEUs, as applicable.*

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices fully meet the standard as indicated by full implementation of the practices outlined in the TS 2 Practice standards.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement as noted in the ratings for the TS 2 Practice standards.

3 Practice requires significant improvement as noted in the ratings for the TS 2 Practice standards.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all, as noted in the ratings for the TS 2 Practice standards.

Table of Evidence

Self Study Evidence

*	• Annual training calendar and/or training schedules	
*	• Table of contents of training curricula	

Site Visit Evidence

*	• Training curricula • Documentation tracking staff completion of required trainings

On-Site Activities

*	• Interviews may include: 1. Program directors 2. Relevant personnel

TS 2.01 (FP)

All personnel who have regular contact with clients receive training on legal issues, including:

a. mandatory reporting, pursuant to relevant professional standards and as required by law, and the identification of clinical indicators of suspected abuse and neglect, as applicable;

b. federal and state laws requiring disclosure of confidential information for law enforcement purposes, including compliance with a court order, warrant, or subpoena;
c. duty to warn, pursuant to relevant professional standards and as required by law;
d. the agency's policies and procedures on confidentiality and disclosure of service recipient information, and penalties for violation of these policies and procedures; and
e. the legal rights of service recipients.

Related Standards: CR 2, PRG 2.01, PRG 4.04

FEC Interpretation: *Elements (a) and (c) do not apply to credit counseling organizations.*

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • A few personnel have not been trained, but are scheduled to be trained.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to two of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • Training does not address one of the elements at all; or • A significant number of staff have not been trained.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 2.02

Personnel receive training on the following, as appropriate to their position and job responsibilities:

a. proper documentation techniques;
b. the maintenance and security of records; and
c. the use of technology and information systems, including artificial intelligence (AI), with refresher training when changes or updates are made.

Related Standards: PRG 1, PRG 2.01, PRG 4.04

Interpretation: *Training on the use of AI should be provided regardless of whether the organization permits its use. The content of the training will vary depending on the organization's policy, but should cover the following topics, when applicable:*

1. *risks, benefits, and ethical considerations associated with AI use;*
2. *acceptable use, including whether AI use is permitted, which applications are approved, their intended purpose, and guidelines for their responsible use;*
3. *the limits of permitted AI applications and staff's responsibility for providing human oversight and accountability; and*
4. *where to go with questions or feedback regarding AI.*

Examples: *To determine whether the use of a particular AI tool is likely to be safe, effective, and appropriate, staff must understand the importance of evaluating how well the demographic or health characteristics represented in the data used to train the AI tool align with those of the client, as misalignment may affect performance or increase risk.*

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • A few personnel have not been trained, but are scheduled to be trained.

3 Practice requires significant improvement; e.g.,
- Training does not address one of the elements at all; or
- A significant number of staff have not been trained.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 2.03

Direct service personnel receive training on:

a. communicating respectfully and effectively with service recipients;
b. engaging service recipients, including building trust, establishing rapport, and developing a professional relationship;
c. understanding the science of trauma and the impact of trauma on individuals, families, and personnel; and
d. trauma-informed care, including screening, assessment, and service delivery practices.

NA: The organization is only assigned the Financial Education and Counseling (FEC) standards.

Related Standards: PRG 4.04

Interpretation: *Training on trauma should be tailored to the type of service being provided. For example, it may not be appropriate or necessary for assessments in an Early Childhood Education (ECE) setting to be trauma-informed. It is up to the organization to assess the applicability of this standard for each of its programs and service population and design the training accordingly.*

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g.,
- The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or
- A few personnel have not been trained, but are scheduled to be trained.

3 Practice requires significant improvement; e.g.,
- The curriculum related to two of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or
- Training does not address one of the elements at all; or
- A significant number of staff have not been trained.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 2.04

Training for direct service personnel addresses differences within the organization’s service population, as appropriate to the type of service being provided, including:

a. interventions that address cultural and socioeconomic factors in service delivery;
b. the role cultural identity plays in motivating human behavior;
c. procedures for working with non-English speaking persons or individuals with communication impairments;
d. explicit and implicit bias and discrimination;
e. the identification of individuals and families with special needs;
f. practices that promote the inclusion and self-determination of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
g. the needs of individuals and families in crisis, including recognizing and responding to a mental health crisis;
h. the needs of victims of violence, abuse, or neglect and their family members; and
i. basic health and medical needs of the service population.

Related Standards: ASE 3.03, CR 1.03, PRG 4.04

FEC Interpretation: *In regards to elements (a) and (b), credit counseling organizations should implement cultural competency training that helps personnel understand and be sensitive to how people of varying cultures think about and handle financial situations.*

Examples: *Depending on the type of service being provided relevant training topics may vary from specialized treatment approaches to procedures for referring individuals to other providers when those needs cannot be addressed by the organization. For example, personnel at a credit counseling agency may encounter individuals with substance use or mental health disorders or individuals who may be at risk for suicide. In such situations, personnel should be aware of the agency's procedures for referring those individuals to appropriate services.*

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is one way to prepare personnel to recognize, understand, and respond to service recipients and colleagues experiencing a mental health crisis. Similarly, "gatekeeper training" programs prepare personnel to recognize, interpret, and respond to signs of suicide risk.

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • A few personnel have not been trained, but are scheduled to be trained.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to two of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • Training does not address one of the elements at all; or • A significant number of staff have not been trained.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 2.05

Direct service personnel demonstrate competence in, or receive training on how to:

a. identify and access needed community resources;
b. collaborate with other service providers;
c. access financial assistance, including public assistance and government subsidies; and
d. empower service recipients and their families to advocate on their own behalf.

FEC Interpretation: *Although credit counseling organizations primarily provide financial education and counseling services, supporting the success and well-being of clients can be furthered by providing information on how to access resources in the community, strengthening the client's ability to do so, and understanding the obstacles that may affect the service population.*

Examples: *One example of community resources are personal advocates and the conditions under which a personal advocate may be needed.*

Rating Indicators:

1	**The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.**
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g.,

- The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or
- A few personnel have not been trained, but are scheduled to be trained.

3

Practice requires significant improvement; e.g.,

- The curriculum related to two of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or
- Training does not address one of the elements at all; or
- A significant number of staff have not been trained.

4

Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 2.06

Personnel receive training, as appropriate to the position or job category, that includes:

a. implementing practices that promote positive behavior;
b. recognizing psychosocial issues, medical conditions, and challenging behaviors that are a threat to self or others and knowing when to seek assistance;
c. understanding how the physical environment, and other factors, can lead to a crisis; and
d. understanding the impact of personnel behaviors and responses on the behavior of service recipients.

NA:

- The organization is only assigned the Financial Education and Counseling (FEC) standards.
- The organization is only assigned the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) standards.

Related Standards: ASE 2.01

Examples: *Training on challenging behaviors that are a threat to self may include responding to age-appropriate but potentially dangerous behavior, for example, reacting to a child who runs into the street, so as not to harm him/her. Relevant psychosocial issues can include the role a service recipient's trauma history may play in their behavior.*

Rating Indicators:

1 The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.

2 Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g.,

- The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or
- A few personnel have not been trained but only work with clients under the oversight of trained personnel.

3 Practice requires significant improvement; e.g.,

- The curriculum related to two of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or
- Training does not address one of the elements at all; or
- A significant number of staff have not been trained.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 2.07 (FP)

Direct service staff receive training on methods for de-escalating volatile situations, including:

a. listening and communication techniques, such as negotiation, centering strengths, and mediation;
b. involving the person in regaining control and encouraging self-calming behaviors;
c. separation of individuals involved in an altercation;

d. offering a voluntary escort to guide the person to a safe location;
e. voluntary withdrawal from the group or milieu to allow the person to calm down; and
f. other non-restrictive ways of de-escalating and reducing episodes of aggressive and out-of-control behavior.

NA:

- The organization is only assigned the Financial Education and Counseling (FEC) standards.
- The organization is only assigned the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) standards.

Related Standards: ASE 2.01

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to one of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • A few personnel have not been trained but only work with clients under the oversight of trained personnel.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • The curriculum related to two of the elements is not fully developed or lacks depth; or • Training does not address one of the elements at all; or • A significant number of staff have not been trained.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

Training and Supervision

TS 3: Supervision

Purpose

The organization supports personnel and promotes personnel competence, satisfaction, and retention by providing initial and ongoing training; a variety of personnel development opportunities; and regular, supportive supervision.

Supervision supports personnel development, retention, and improved outcomes.

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices fully meet the standard as indicated by full implementation of the practices outlined in the TS 3 Practice standards.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement as noted in the ratings for the TS 3 Practice standards.
3	Practice requires significant improvement as noted in the ratings for the TS 3 Practice standard.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

Table of Evidence

Self Study Evidence

*

• Written supervision framework	

Site Visit Evidence

*

- HR policies and procedures regarding staff supervision
- Documentation of supervision or supervision logs
- Sample job descriptions of supervisors from each program or service (i.e. front line, managers, department directors)

On-Site Activities

*

- Interview:
    1. HR Director
    2. Supervisors
    3. Personnel at all levels

TS 3.01 (FP)

The organization has a supervision framework that:

a. identifies the job responsibilities, skill set, and other behaviors required of supervisors, including their administrative, educational, and supportive functions;
b. sets supervisor-supervisee ratios;
c. establishes expectations for the frequency and format of supervision;
d. establishes expectations for the frequency and format of ongoing performance review; and
e. establishes resources and supports for supervisors.

Examples: *Examples of resources and supports for supervisors include, but are not limited to:*

1. *employment assistance programs;*

2. *mentoring and coaching;*
3. *offering lateral transfers to less stressful assignments; and*
4. *ensuring coverage so supervisors can take advantage of trainings or other professional development opportunities.*

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • the supervision framework is comprehensive but some aspects of the framework need clarifying.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • Two elements are not fully addressed; or • One of the elements is not addressed at all.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 3.02

Supervisors have sufficient time to:

a. provide regularly scheduled supervision and conduct evaluation and training activities as outlined in the organization's supervision framework; and
b. offer flexible support in response to crisis situations or urgent needs.

Interpretation: *Supervisors should maintain an administrative file with up-to-date documentation of each supervisory session, including the date and duration of each session as well as a brief outline or summary of what was discussed.*

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • With a few exceptions the supervisors have sufficient time to conduct supervision and there are only occasional gaps in regular supervision; or • Time allocated to evaluation and/or training could be improved.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • Supervisors are frequently unable to provide supervision due to time constraints; or • Do not have time to participate in evaluation or training activities; or • Documentation of supervision is poorly maintained.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 3.03

Supervisors' administrative, educational, and supportive functions include:

a. delegating and overseeing work assignments;
b. ensuring that service delivery is performed according to the organization's mission, policies and procedures, and applicable law and regulation;
c. promoting knowledge acquisition and skill development through various professional development opportunities;
d. assisting personnel in transferring the skills and knowledge obtained in the classroom to their work in the field; and
e. implementing policies and procedures designed to prevent, recognize, and respond to work-related stress.

Examples: *In regard to element (d), ways to support knowledge transference can include, but are not limited to:*

1. *working with personnel to identify the most appropriate trainings for their position;*

2. *clarifying the purpose and relevance of the training before it is delivered;*
3. *following up with personnel to establish a plan for incorporating acquired skills and knowledge into their work, including setting performance goals and methods for tracking progress when appropriate;*
4. *modeling appropriate practice and/or establishing mentorships with more experienced colleagues; and*
5. *observing practice in the field accompanied by constructive feedback.*

In regard to element (e), activities or practices that are designed to prevent, recognize and respond to work-related stress can include, but are not limited to:

1. *training supervisors and workers on the potential impacts of work-related stress and prevention strategies;*
2. *reflective supervision;*
3. *peer support;*
4. *encouraging flex time arrangements;*
5. *informal and formal assessment tools;*
6. *managing work assignments to avoid heavy caseloads of traumatized individuals; and*
7. *providing access to employee assistance programs.*

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • A significant number of supervisors do not meet the requirements of the standard.
4	Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.

TS 3.04

Supervisors provide additional support to personnel when they are:

a. new;
b. developing competencies, including personnel who have not yet obtained professional licensure or certification;
c. experiencing challenging or traumatic circumstances with the individuals and families they work with; or
d. experiencing higher caseloads.

Interpretation: *The suicide attempt or death of a service recipient can be a traumatic experience for staff. To help staff process the loss of a service recipient to suicide, voluntary non-judgmental support services should be made available to help the affected staff and other personnel grieve and prepare for future contact with individuals at risk for suicide.*

Examples: *Examples of additional support that might be needed by personnel include, but are not limited to:*

1. *more frequent supervision;*
2. *additional training opportunities;*
3. *shadowing; and*
4. *voluntary crisis response services.*

Rating Indicators:

1	The organization's practices reflect full implementation of the standard.
2	Practices are basically sound but there is room for improvement; e.g., • Staff report that with a few exceptions supervisors provide additional support as required by the standard.
3	Practice requires significant improvement; e.g., • Staff report that supervisors do not consistently provide additional support.

4 Implementation of the standard is minimal or there is no evidence of implementation at all.