

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Section | Page |
|--|-------------|
| I. Purpose | 2 |
| II. Authority | 2 |
| III. Scope..... | 2 |
| IV. Definitions | 2 |
| V. Procedures | 3 |
| VI. Training | 4 |
| VII. Supportive Data and References | 6 |
| VIII. History Notes | 7 |
| IX. Signature and Effective Date | 7 |

IOP 360-07-17

- I. **Purpose:** The Department's Minimum Standards for HIV Counselors, Trainers, and Early Intervention Consultants are critical to the training, implementation, and daily operation of HIV counseling and testing activities across the state of Florida. This procedure standardizes the process for training individuals to administer HIV testing, training those who train or teach individuals to administer HIV testing, and training and development of new Early Intervention Consultants.
- II. **Authority:** Section 381.004, Florida Statutes; Florida Administrative Code Rule 64D-2.
- III. **Scope:** All Department personnel, contracted staff, and volunteers.
- IV. **Definitions**
 - A. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** The CDC is the leading national public health institute of the United States. The CDC is a United States federal agency under the Department of Health and Human Services, headquartered near Atlanta, Georgia.
 - B. **Community-based Providers:** Nonprofit groups that work at a local level to improve life for residents. The focus is to build equality across society in all streams—health care, environment, quality of education, access to technology, access to spaces, and information for the disabled, to name a few.
 - C. **Counselor:** A health professional responsible for providing essential HIV counseling and testing services to clients and families who may be at risk of infection or are affected by the disease. An HIV/AIDS counselor specializes in providing educational and medical information to help prevent the spread of HIV.
 - D. **County Health Department (CHD):** CHDs work to preserve, protect, and enhance the general health and environment of the community by providing leadership in public health policy, assuring access to quality health services and information, preventing disease, and enforcing health regulations.
 - E. **Department:** The Florida Department of Health.
 - F. **Early Intervention Consultant (EIC):** EICs are regional positions covering 15 jurisdictional areas across Florida. EICs ensure an effective HIV-testing training system exists in their area, participates in quality improvement and technical assistance activities, ensures an adequate distribution of test sites (confidential and anonymous) that target high-risk and priority populations, and evaluates area counseling and testing programs by requesting and reviewing HIV testing data on a regular basis.

IOP 360-07-17

- G. HIV:** The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a lentivirus (a subgroup of retrovirus) that causes HIV infection and over time acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).
 - H. HIV/AIDS 500:** Basic HIV Counseling and Testing training course required for certification as an HIV counselor and tester in the state of Florida. Prerequisite to HIV/AIDS 501 course. Online or classroom, 4-hour requirement.
 - I. HIV/AIDS 501:** Advanced HIV Counseling and Testing training course required for certification as an HIV counselor and tester in the state of Florida. Online or classroom, 4-hour requirement. Face to face practicum, 12-hour requirement.
 - J. Linkage:** Linkage to care is the process of engaging newly diagnosed HIV-infected persons into HIV primary care.
 - K. Partner Services (PS):** PS provides an array of free services to persons with HIV or other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) such as syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydial infection and their partners. PS is a function of local and state health department staff who help to identify and locate sex or drug-injection partners to inform them of their risk and to provide them testing, counseling, and referrals for other services.
 - L. Role Plays:** To act out or perform the part of a person or character, for example as a technique in training.
 - M. Trainer:** A State, County, or Department employee certified to train other individuals in the HIV/AIDS 500/501 Counseling, Testing and Linkage Course and/or other Department sponsored courses.
- V. Procedures**
- A. Administrative Functions and Responsibilities**

 1. CHD or contract provider staff must provide the opportunity for quality HIV counseling, testing, and, if appropriate, linkage or referral to care providers and PS.
 2. Every participant attending a Department sponsored course (for example, HIV/AIDS 500/501 Prevention Counseling, Testing and Linkage course) will receive current Department and CDC-approved information and the same core elements, as specified in the course materials, regardless of where the course was given or the instructor.

IOP 360-07-17

3. Staff for whom HIV counseling, testing, and linkage is a primary area of responsibility will be given priority for training. Others will be scheduled for training as space is available.
4. Community-based providers registered with the Department that have a contract or memorandum of agreement to provide HIV counseling, testing, and linkage will not be charged for prerequisite or requisite training.
5. HIV counseling, testing, and linkage staff, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 500/501 manual, who successfully complete the HIV/AIDS 500/501 course and all pre- and post-requisites will receive a certificate of successful completion, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 manual. HIV/AIDS 501 trainers reserve the right to deny certificates to those staff who do not successfully complete prerequisite or requisite materials and activities.
6. The EIC will review all documentation of the participant's successful completion of requisite activities prior to issuing a final certificate.
7. HIV/AIDS 501 trainers will be monitored a minimum of one time annually by the EIC or designee using a standardized tool.
8. HIV/AIDS 501 course class rosters and participant evaluations will be maintained by the HIV/AIDS 501 trainer and made available to the EIC or designee upon request.

VI. Training

A. Training Individuals to Administer HIV Counseling and Testing

1. Training will be adequate, available, and locally coordinated depending on needs and resources. (HIV counseling, testing, and linkage training taken in other states is not transferable.)
2. The 8-hour HIV/AIDS 500/501 class is available online through TRAIN or through face to face classroom instruction. The 12-hour practicum is only provided through face to face classroom instruction. Total HIV/AIDS 500/501 online/classroom and practicum equals 20 hours.
3. The participant must have had the HIV/AIDS 500 prerequisite, or equivalent course, no longer than six months prior to registration for the HIV/AIDS 501 course.
4. The participant must successfully complete the prerequisite module prior to participation in the HIV/AIDS 501 course.

IOP 360-07-17

5. The participant must complete the registration package, including the disclaimer form, and return to the trainer prior to the class.
6. All staff who perform HIV counseling, testing, and linkage must successfully complete the HIV/AIDS 501 Prevention, Counseling, Testing and Linkage course as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 course manual. CHD Directors/Administrators may choose to exempt licensed medical personnel from this requirement. This exemption is limited to: physicians (section 458 and 459, Florida Statutes), physician assistants (section 458.347, Florida Statutes), advanced registered nurse practitioners (section 464.015 (8), Florida Statutes) and dentists (section 466.003 (2), Florida Statutes). Exempted medical personnel using the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories should complete appropriate Department forms training.
7. All counselors will observe a minimum of one pre-test counseling session, one HIV-negative post-test counseling session, and one HIV-positive post-test counseling session. Role plays are acceptable on a case-by-case basis for the one HIV-positive post-test counseling session.
8. All counselors will perform a minimum of one pre-test counseling session, one HIV-negative post-test counseling session, and one HIV-positive post-test counseling session under the supervision of an experienced counselor having a minimum of one year's experience providing client centered HIV counseling, testing, and linkage services. Role plays are acceptable on a case-by-case basis.
9. The participant must complete the entire training. In the event of an emergency, the instructor may make other course completion arrangements at his/her discretion. The participant must demonstrate skills learned through required course exercises.
10. Post-training requisites should be completed within 60 days of class completion.
11. Annual participation in the Department approved 501 update curricula, provided by a trainer, is required for recertification of all HIV counselors and testers. Recertification is required to continue HIV testing.

B. Training of Trainers. Department staff who provide instruction to CHD and contract provider HIV counselors regarding HIV pre-test, post-test, and PS methods will be held to the following minimum standards:

IOP 360-07-17

1. Participants will have successfully completed the HIV/AIDS 501 course, as defined in the HIV/AIDS 501 manual, and all post-training requisites no less than six months prior to becoming an HIV/AIDS 501 trainer.
2. Participants will have a minimum of 40 hours of HIV counseling, testing, and linkage experience, including at least one actual HIV-positive post-test counseling session (role plays are not acceptable) within the past two years.
3. Participants will have observed a minimum of one STD staff member providing partner notification services in the field.
4. Participants will have the ability to teach, train, or speak in a public setting.
5. Participants will successfully complete the HIV/AIDS 501 Train-the-Trainer course.
6. Participants will co-teach a minimum of one HIV/AIDS 501 course with an EIC or designee.
7. Participants will conduct a minimum of one HIV/AIDS 501 course under the observation of an EIC or designee.

C. Training of EIC

1. The new EIC will co-teach a minimum of one HIV/AIDS Train-the-Trainer session with an experienced EIC.
2. The new EIC will work with a minimum of two experienced EICs and observe at least one HIV/AIDS Train-the-Trainer session.
3. The new EIC will successfully complete all of the components for HIV/AIDS counselors and HIV/AIDS 501 trainers within the first year of employment.

VII. Supportive Data and References

- A.** Section 381.004, Florida Statutes:
www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&pp_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=381.004&URL=0300-0399/0381/Sections/0381.004.html

IOP 360-07-17

- B.** Florida Administrative Code, Section 64D-2.004:
[www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?title=HUMAN%20IMMUNODEFICIENCY%20VIRUS%20\(HIV\)&ID=64D-2.004](http://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?title=HUMAN%20IMMUNODEFICIENCY%20VIRUS%20(HIV)&ID=64D-2.004)
- C.** HIV Counseling and Testing Forms Instruction Guide:
www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/aids/prevention/_documents/Counseling_testing/_documents/2016-forms-instruction-guide.pdf
- D.** National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States, July 2010:
www.aids.gov/federal-resources/national-hiv-aids-strategy/nhas-update.pdf
- E.** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Revised Recommendations for HIV Testing of Adults, Adolescents, and Pregnant Women in Health-Care Settings; September 22, 2006/55(RR14);1-17:
www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5514a1.htm
- F.** U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, Revised Guidelines for HIV Counseling, Testing, and Referral; September 22, 2006/55(RR14);1-17:
www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5514a1.htm
- G.** Chapter 384, Florida Statutes:
www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0300-0399/0384/0384ContentsIndex.html

VIII. History Notes: Replaces IOP 360-07-17; effective date 11/01/2017.

IX. Signature and Effective Date

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Date