

Best Practices for In-Person Training During the COVID-19 Pandemic

If your academy chooses to run in-person training for your academy you may implement the following best practices to decrease possible COVID-19 exposure. This is not an all-inclusive list and are recommendations based on best practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. You should consult with your colleges and your local health authorities when making these decisions. Your staff should continue to collaborate regularly and evaluate your situation and ensure you are taking the proper precautions for your staff and recruits.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice is not requiring any of these practices. We are providing them as options to for academies to consider as they navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. DOJ has not evaluated any of these recommendations. You should review them within your academy/technical college and consult resources – including your city attorney or corporation counsel – before you implement them.

We will update this list as we learn more, and we will highlight changes from the last version in red. If your academy would like to share any additional tips or considerations please send those to Stephanie Pederson at pedersonse@doj.state.wi.us.

To keep your facility up and running, and to comply with the Governor Evers' Directive, you should consider implementing the following precautionary measures:

1. Follow general COVID-19 best practices (stay 6 feet away from people, when possible, avoid shaking hands, don't touch your eyes, nose or face, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often, avoid large groups of people, get good sleep, food, and exercise).
2. Do deliberate reminders of safety considerations, with an emphasis on COVID-19 on an ongoing basis.
3. Take student and instructor temperature each morning. If over 100.4 send student or instructor home. Student may have to be excused from the academy and/or quarantined.
4. Upon return to the academy to complete physical skills training (after spring break or online training) have students complete a health screening form – developed by Chippewa Valley Tech or your own academy. Once back to the academy on a regular basis, ask general health questions daily – symptoms, travel, etc.
5. Graduation ceremonies for basic classes in session should be canceled till further notice.
6. Reschedule staff meetings and partner organization meetings and move those to conference calls or other meeting resources like Zoom, Blue Jeans, GoToMeeting, etc.
7. Follow social distancing guidelines where you can.
8. Disinfect items normally used during presentations such as computers, monitors, audio and visual equipment in the classroom and other tools used in courses you don't normally think about (measuring tapes, radar or Lidar units for example).
9. Provide recruits with a card developed by the CDC or local health agency reminding them of preventative measures they should take regarding COVID-19. Place posters on restroom doors, in the training area, etc. reminding recruits of these protective measures.
10. Ask staff and students to stay home if they feel sick or unsafe. If a student in the dorms is sick move them to an isolated dorm wing and decontaminate their room.
11. If students are in a classroom setting, have students in the largest room possible with the ability to separate students at their own desks at least 6 feet apart if not more.
12. When giving safety briefings (with students and staff practicing social distancing) add specific health and PPE information along with decontamination protocols to the briefing.

13. Take extra steps to ensure all training environments are cleaned and sanitized on a regular basis. Decontaminate your skills rooms after each session. Ask students and staff to wipe down things like steering wheels in cars used for EVOC, etc. Continue to monitor the health and safety of all students and staff on campus and reevaluate training delivery as needed. Think of the training areas or classrooms like a surgical suite in a hospital. All surfaces, tools, and equipment should be cleaned and sanitized between uses.
14. Wipe or spray down mats with sanitizer after each group has conducted their skills practice/testing. This should include floor mats as well as wall mats.
15. Limit training to a wing or specific rooms. Document what areas students have been in and alert cleaning staff so those rooms/common areas can be cleaned daily.
16. For physical skills, train in smaller groups and use good hygiene practices. Consider having students wear gloves, mask and eye protection. Wipe down all equipment before and after training and consider doing it during training as well.
17. For physical skills such as DAAT, have students keep the same partner throughout the training to reduce exposure to multiple people. Partners can remind each other if they are touching their eyes, nose or face and other preventive measures.
18. For Firearms training: train at outdoor ranges if possible. If not, ensure your indoor ranges have a good ventilation system. Have recruits stand at every other firing point to maintain social distancing. Range officers and safety officers should also maintain distance when possible. Wipe down all equipment and firing points between each use. Range and safety officers should wear PPE. Don't forget to tell students to decontaminate weapons, duty belts, etc.
19. Training with vehicles. Reduce the number of students in vehicles – try and only have one student in the vehicle if possible. Wipe down the vehicle (steering wheel, seat belt and buckle, radio, windows and door handles, etc.) between use. If instructors need to be in vehicles with recruits, they should wear PPE.
20. For integration exercises, final skills scenarios, etc. have sponsored students bring in their protective gear, red-man suits, etc. from their agency to reduce students having to share equipment.
21. All scenario and protective gear (face, head, throat protection) should be cleaned before reissue to another student (as well as props or shared issued equipment). If the academy has enough to provide to each student, avoid having to reissue gear to multiple students.
22. Conduct scenarios or practical skills in large open settings or outdoors when practical.
23. Reduce contact with outside (civilian) role players.
24. Have students wash their uniforms/clothes each night after training. They should take their clothes straight to the washing machine and not shake them out or sit around in them before putting them in the washing machine. This will reduce exposure to their family. They should also shower and put on clean clothes before coming into contact with their family at home. They should also disinfect their duty belt, boots, etc. each night and come back to class the next day with clean clothes and clean equipment, shoes, etc.
25. New: When wearing PPE, facial hair may make it difficult to get a good seal on your mask. For a better seal/protection, consider shaving or trimming beards.

Dining Facilities:

1. Close any dining halls to anyone outside the academy – no guests.
2. For academies with food service they should implement additional cleaning and sanitizing measures. Close the salad bar and use pre-made salads by dining hall staff along with other measures that limit food provision only by dining hall staff. Move to prepared meals served in disposable containers with disposable dining utensils.

3. Adjust the dining hall schedule with classes being held to specific time frames as to when they need to eat to avoid all of the classes being in the dining hall at once.
4. Check with your local city/county ordinance and the Governor's directives to see if communal dining is even allowed. If so, practice social distancing or have recruits sit separately while eating their meals.

What Kills COVID-19:

Disinfectants with 60% alcohol are needed. That includes most of the alcohol hand sanitizers you come in contact with. This does not include "dime store" hand sanitizers that are 10% alcohol, 90% glitter, and smell like strawberries.

Other things that work:

- Sanitizing wipes and sprays like Lysol or Clorox
- Dilute bleach (90% water and 10% of a household bleach solution)
- Soap and water
- Ultraviolet light (sunlight)

What doesn't work:

- Homeopathic all-natural remedy products, unless that remedy includes bleach or 60% alcohol.
- Vodka, inside or outside.
- Homemade hand sanitizers, unless they contain 60% alcohol.
- Please don't sanitize your hands or skin with bleach. That's a terrible idea for your skin.