



CORE ACADEMY TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

CIRRICULUM AND CONTENT

Curriculum. Core Academy Training is the introductory victim advocacy training that all individuals must attend in order to provide direct services to those individuals hurt or harmed by crime in Washington State. It is a basic 40-hour advocacy training that meets state and national guidelines to become a qualified crime victim advocate. VSS is required to teach specific curriculum that meets these requirements. The basic introductory training includes the following topics:

1. Advocacy/Role of the Advocate
2. Cultural Sensitivity/Competency
3. Case Management/Coordination
4. Ethics/Confidentiality
5. Civil/Criminal Justice System
6. History of Victim Services
7. Crime Victims Compensation
8. Trauma of Victimization
9. Crisis Intervention
10. Victims' Rights

Those participants that successfully complete Core Academy Training will be eligible, at minimum, for the Provisional credential level through the National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP).

Credentialing offers many benefits to those in the victim assistance field, including but not limited to: enhanced recognition, credibility and mobility in the victim assistance field, promotion and acknowledgement of a standardized minimum of forty (40) hours of pre-service training and encouragement of thirty-two (32) hours of continuing education every two years; initiation and definition by the field, rather than by outside professional groups, and more. More information will be provided during training.

Content. Crime Victim Advocacy is a rewarding, albeit challenging field. The reality of providing direct services to individuals hurt or harmed by crime is discussed at length. Some presenters share traumatic information and/or photos, and content discussed may be difficult to process at times. The content discussed in training is what we face in our respective positions when working directly with crime victims, which will provide insight on what to expect in the victim services field. There will be occasional times to debrief, but it is important to be mindful and take care of yourself throughout the week.

Training can be mentally and emotionally draining, and this is why it is critical to have a plan in place to focus on self-care; please be prepared for this.

Presenters. There are a variety of external and VSS presenters. Core Academy would not be successful without the support of community partners who volunteer their time to share their expertise and knowledge at training. Presenters include law enforcement, prosecutor(s), advocates, and more. Presenters are respected colleagues in the criminal justice/victim services field and whom advocates work with very closely in their day-to-day jobs. Community Partners/Resources are extremely valuable when working with victims of crime, and participants will gain a wealth of information to enhance their victim advocacy career. At the end of Core Academy Training a list of professional contact information for all presenters will be provided in lieu of business cards. This information is confidential and we ask that you please seek permission before providing this information to a client.

Handouts and materials. Any handouts and materials required for each session will be emailed before the respective class is taught. You will need access to a printer, and materials should be printed before the start of the next day of training. Please note that all sessions do not require handouts and materials.

Core Academy Training Manual. You will be emailed a Core Academy Training manual. It is your responsibility to print and put together a book/binder if you choose to, or you may refer to it electronically. The Core Academy Manual is for your use only.

EQUIPMENT

Zoom. Core Academy Training is hosted via Zoom Video Connections. You do not need to have a Zoom account in order to join meetings. We ask that your set-up in as professional a space as possible for the training. Use only your real name (both first and last name). There will be one zoom link per training day (5 total). Please do not share Zoom meeting information as it is confidential and participants must be vetted in advance.

Equipment. Victim Support Services bears no responsibility for the participant's equipment (e.g., computer, modem, internet connection, speakers, webcam, and microphones). In other words, you are exclusively responsible for the condition of your personal equipment and for performing the obligatory technical checks prior to attending Core Academy Training. It is encouraged to test out all equipment in advance to make sure you can connect to video, audio and have a strong internet connection for Zoom capabilities. Participants are required to utilize their camera/video throughout the entire training, and in order to receive a certificate of completion. *There are no exceptions to this requirement.*

CANCELLATION POLICY

Refunds. Virtual Core Academy Training, like any other in-person Core Academy Training, has limited capacity. Demand for training is very high, and late cancellation may prevent other students from obtaining a spot. As stated on the Core Application, refunds will only be given up to two weeks before the first day of CORE. If for any reason after CORE starts you are no longer able to attend, refunds will not be issued. If/when you decide to register to attend a Core Academy Training at a later date in order to fulfill requirements, you must pay the registration fee again.

Exclusion from Virtual Core Academy Training. Victim Support Services promotes a professional learning environment and expects participants to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner. VSS reserves the right to exclude participants in the event of any behavior or comments perceived to be disruptive, disrespectful or threatening. In such an event, no refund will be payable to you, if excluded.

YOUR OBLIGATIONS

Be on time for each virtual session. As a best practice, plan to be a few minutes early! Once the instructional team allows participants into the virtual classroom, you must immediately type your first name into the chat box. This confirms your attendance and is required at the beginning of each session. In order to meet state and national requirements and to receive a certificate of completion, you must attend all sessions live and be punctual. Sessions will not be available to view later. Participants who are more than ten minutes late to a session, or miss a full session, will not receive credit and must retake Core Academy Training at a later date.

The schedule is subject to change. Time is allotted for each session. Occasionally during Core, the session duration may change, and start times and end times may differ slightly than what is originally scheduled. Technology, group discussions, participant questions, external trainers, and more can affect the schedule. For example, if an instructor allots ten minutes for questions at the end of their respective session but there are no questions, the session may conclude ten minutes early, and therefore the next scheduled break will be taken at an earlier time, and the next session will also start earlier than originally planned. We do our best to adhere to the schedule, but in a training environment such as this, things can (and will) change frequently. It is expected that you make yourself available each day from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and plan ahead for possible changes in breaks and/or sessions. It is encouraged not to plan professional and personal commitments during these times. Participants shall remain flexible as it is inevitable that the schedule will change dependent on the above. Plan accordingly and plan in advance, there will be no exceptions.

Minimize distractions. Please consider your training area, and eliminate any possible interruptions. Best practice includes logging out of email, silencing your cell phone (and desk phone if you have one), and going inactive in instant messaging applications. If you have coworkers or family in your immediate space, putting a “do not disturb” sign on your door can also prove helpful. Please refrain from responding to emails, phone calls and computer use other than what is required for Core. VSS understands that all have respective jobs and responsibilities to tend to, but we ask that you be respectful of everyone’s time. Unlike a webinar that is listened to while working on other tasks, all participants must be fully engaged in this Core training, as would be expected in an in-person training. Calls and emails may be responded to during allotted breaks in order to remain engaged and receive your certificate of completion.

Chat Box. The Chat Box feature in Zoom will be used for five purposes in Core Academy Training:

1. To confirm attendance in each session
2. To ask questions related to the content being taught
3. To provide resources and other information specific to the content being taught
4. To participate in activities specific to the session being taught
5. To message the instructional team

The chat box feature should not be used for side conversations or to discuss content unrelated to the curriculum. All participants must remain respectful of each other and conversations will be monitored.

Participate! Most learners experience the virtual training atmosphere for the first time in a webinar-format, which typically involves very little contribution. However, in true virtual training sessions, participants must arrive ready to participate. Facilitators can be expected to call on participants by name and request responses and/or feedback (verbally). Additionally, some sessions require group activities such as break-out sessions, polls, and more. Please show up prepared and ready to engage; this will help you get the most out of training.

Have patience. Participants who ask questions in face-to-face trainings expect immediate answers. Sometimes this does not happen in the virtual setting, especially if participants submit questions via the chat feature. The instructional team will monitor chat and respond via text or verbal response when they can. If there is an urgent question or concern, please use the “raise hand” feature.

Keep us in the loop. There will be 15-minute breaks in between *most* sessions and an hour long lunch each day. If you need to step away to use the restroom or grab a cup of coffee during a session (we encourage you to wait for allotted breaks), or if you have to leave the training due to an unexpected emergency, we ask that you use the coffee cup emoticon or send a private chat to the instructional team (Leslie and/or Janine) to let them know. Keeping lines of communication open helps ensure that the virtual session goes smoothly for everyone.

Communicate professionally with others. Throughout the training, each time you speak, we ask that you state your name so that others begin to recognize your voice. Wait for others to finish speaking before you speak. Build on others’ ideas and thoughts. Disagreeing is okay, but please always remain respectful and courteous.

Be sensitive to confidential information. Confidential information may be shared amongst participants, including personal experiences and/or client information. All conversation that takes place during CORE should not be shared outside of training. All participants should feel safe when sharing, please respect each other’s privacy.

Help us improve training. There will be one cumulative evaluation to complete at the end of Core. We value feedback in order to make improvements. Each participant that completes the evaluation will be entered in a raffle to win a \$25 gift card.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

All participants **MUST** attend the entire training, from beginning to end, in order to receive a Certificate of Completion for Core Training. No partial credit or certificates will be issued. Upon successful completion of training, certificates will be emailed to you within a week of successful completion of Core Academy Training.