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## MEMO

To: Program Training Directors, Commission on Accreditation Site Visitors, Commissioners and Accreditation Constituents

From: The APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

Date: December 1, 2021

RE: Ongoing response to COVID-19 outbreak

As COVID-19 cases decline and states reopen, the APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation (OPCA) continues to assess compliance with accreditation policies and procedures considering the pandemic. Colleges and universities are attempting to navigate reopening and how this potentially impacts the delivery of courses in winter 2021, including offering clinical training. Education and training programs are asking how long they will be allowed to offer COVID-19-related modified instructional delivery and/or clinical service procedures. Also, while APA is current conducting its site visits virtually, there is ongoing consideration about when visits in-person may start again.

We understand the complexities organizations and individuals face around transitioning to “normal” operations. The OPCA is continuing to work with the CoA to monitor this unfolding situation. The following information is provided as guidance for academic programs and site visitors.

**Academic programs:** CoA guidance issued in January 2021 has been revised and extended through June 30, 2022. Programs are advised to follow the guidance offered by their institutional administration, as well as that from the [World Health Organization](#), the [US Center for Disease Control](#) and federal, state, and local laws and health department rules to maintain operations in a way that minimizes exposure risk to the virus. In addition, the office of post-secondary education of the US Department of Education has provided [guidance](#) that allows educational program’s flexibility in the methods by which students may continue to be served.

The CoA supports programs in their efforts to determine the best ways for students and trainees to successfully develop knowledge and competencies in accord with program requirements. Telesupervision, telepractice and distance education delivery are not prohibited, and CoA recognizes that ongoing use of these methods temporarily during this time may be necessary. Requirements for the use of these three distance methods, when implemented as a regular educational delivery method, are described in the CoA [Implementing Regulations](#) for the Standards of Accreditation. If in-person coursework and/or clinical practice experiences are disrupted, flexibility in the use of these distance practices is appropriate as part of a program’s plan to minimize COVID-19 exposure.

Programs are advised to consider external regulatory requirements when making decisions about their delivery structure at this time. Consult with other regulatory agencies including institutional accreditors and licensure agencies about modified activities involving students and trainees and their delivery of services.

If you have any questions, please email the OPCA at [apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org).

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