



**Special Meeting  
Training Work Group**

November 14, 2025 – 12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.

**165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Conference Room G006D or Virtual (Hybrid)**

**In Attendance:**

Thomas Ahneman, Chair (virtual)  
Roberto Fernandez (virtual)  
Donna Karnes (in person)  
James Marpe (in person)

**Staff Members in Attendance (In person):**

Gregory Daniels, Executive Director  
Carmen Hufcut, Trainer Specialist  
Aaron Felman, Staff Attorney  
Maritza Lopez, Accounts Examiner  
Aleshia Hall, Administrative Assistant

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order:** Chair Ahneman called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

a. Roll Call of Training Work Group Members as reflected above.

**2. Approval of Minutes of September 12, 2025, meeting**

A motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Bob Fernandez.

The motion was seconded by Thomas Ahneman.

The motion passed unanimously with one abstention from Donna Karnes.

**3. Discussion and approval of the Training Handbook**

a. Open discussion

Chair Ahneman requested tabling this discussion in the interest of time; however, Trainer Specialist Hufcut shared that the Accreditation review is due in April, and action needs to be taken within the coming months. It is important that this be completed by March 2026 for timely completion of the Accreditation report. Rather than taking meeting time to review the Training Handbook as a group, Trainer Specialist Hufcut recommended that the Work Group members take time and review the handbook over the next month and make notes on any items requiring discussion.



She has printed copies available for distribution to Work Group members if they prefer paper to digital. Chair Ahneman agreed and tasked the Work Group members to have their edits prepared for discussion at the January 2026 meeting.

#### **4. Federal Accessibility Mandate for Digital Applications – Trainer Specialist Hufcut**

a. CT Enterprise Digital Accessibility Initiative: Agency Deliverables Timeline

Trainer Specialist Hufcut explained that a new Federal Rule was issued in 2024 and is scheduled to go into effect in 2026 that requires all public-facing services to be in compliance with accessibility mandates. This mandate applies to every course that she has developed as well as the agency's website.

The timeline dictates that on December 19, 2025, she must submit a course as an audit sample to be reviewed by BITS, along with access to the learning management system (LMS) for them to access and review all courses. She has selected the newly completed Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) course for audit.

The deadline for compliance is April 2026. Trainer Specialist Hufcut will continue to report on our progress.

#### **5. Academic Sub-Work Group creation**

a. What procedures will be available for individuals who wish to file a grievance?

A process needs to be developed for a course participant to file a grievance. Executive Director Daniels shared that we do not have an existing grievance process. In the past, he drafted a grievance process and submitted it to the Chair, but it was not finalized.

We are tasked with developing a process by which an aggrieved training participant can file a grievance. Chair Ahneman asked Executive Director Daniels to explore existing grievance policies. Executive Director Daniels believes that we can likely borrow a policy from another agency. Trainer Specialist Hufcut explained that the courses are created for people to learn and pass the courses. Two attempts are given to answer each question. The correct answers are provided as you proceed through the course; therefore, on the second opportunity, it is highly likely that a participant will pass with a 100% score. Additionally, Trainer Specialist Hufcut is available to assist; therefore, she does not suspect that there will be a grievance.

Staff Attorney Felman said this does not need to be belabored. While it is foreseeable that someone may want to go through a process, it is unlikely as these



courses are designed for the participant to learn and pass. As a result, we can accomplish this easily. Executive Director Daniels explained that for accreditation purposes, we need to have a process. Trainer Specialist Hufcut noted that there are provisions for this in the handbook. If more regulations or policies are required, we can build upon that. Ms. Hufcut asked that Work Group members focus on the grievance process as they review the handbook.

## **6. Discussion regarding the fees for training courses - Executive Director Daniels**

- a. Continuation from the idea introduced during the Board Meeting on September 12, 2025.

Executive Director Daniels met with Gene Burk of DAS to discuss this topic. There are many arguments and statutory language in opposition to fees. We do not have explicit statutory authority to charge fees, which is required to do so. Additionally, if we were to collect fees, the money would be returned to the general fund, unless it was specifically statutorily allocated for a dedicated purpose. Collecting fees from state agencies and returning the money to the general fund, does not make sense to do so.

Mr. Marpe also noted that we are encouraging agency staff to participate and charging the agencies would directly interfere with that initiative.

Mr. Ahneman will recommend to the Board that we no longer pursue this issue. He intends to put that in his committee report next month. He does want to remind the legislature of the expenses involved in creating these training opportunities, so they fund us accordingly.

## **7. Discussion and approval of the Internal Policies and Progress for Participants, previously distributed to workgroup members.**

Trainer Specialist Hufcut again asked that the Work Group members review the handbook before the January 2026 meeting.

Attorney Felman stated that the Training Handbook does not contain any problematic language that raises concern. Trainer Specialist Hufcut reminded the group that much of this handbook was created to ensure that we would meet accreditation standards. Many of these policies were taken from existing State policies.

- a. Internal Policies and Progress for Participants per Accreditation
  - Course Content Review Policy (page 35-36, handbook)



- Participants' Registrations (page 40-41, handbook)
- Participant Support System (pages 42-43, handbook)
- Participant ID verification (pages 44-45, handbook)
- Roles and Responsibilities of Maintaining Learner Records (page 45, handbook)
- Privacy and Information Policy (page 46, handbook)
- Professional Development Practice (page 47, handbook)
- Lesson Plan (page 53, handbook)

Mr. Ahneman and Attorney Felman intend to schedule a separate meeting if they have any questions regarding the areas listed above.

## **8. Update on Interagency Training Program Collaboration**

- a. DAS – meeting 9/26/2025  
DAS has created three training courses that will be incorporated into our catalog. Before doing so, these courses will have to be brought into compliance with the new Federal mandates. DAS does not have the ability to do so; however, our software allows us to incorporate Closed Caption into the training courses. Due to her current workload, this initiative will not be pursued until 2026.

FOIA currently does not have virtual training courses available, so they are excited to be able to share our course once it has been finalized.

## **9. Courses update: Trainer Specialist Hufcut reported:**

- a. Audit: This course is in progress. Although the Audit Work Group has asked that she stop working on this course, Trainer Specialist Hufcut and Accounts Examiner Lopez are using this course as a basis for building the audit process. Once the audit process is finalized, the course can be completed.
- b. FOI: This course is 90% complete and is currently in the hands of the Subject Matter Expert (SME).
- c. Leasing/Real Estate: Ms. Hufcut has been researching the concerns that raised the need for this topic to be pursued and has initiated a format for this course. Once completed, she will share with Donna Karnes, the SME for this area.

## **10. Action Items Review - Executive Director Daniels**



Executive Director Daniels explained that this item will be added to each agenda going forward. This item is intended to compile a list of action items and deliverables at the conclusion of each meeting.

Mr. Fernandez said that the staff does extremely good work, but he wants to tighten the processes to ensure that everyone's roles are clearly laid out. By producing this, the highlighting of the good work being done will clear.

- a. Trainer Specialist Hufcut
  - Continue toward completion of federally accessibility compliance mandate.
  - Continue toward finalizing FOIA training course.
  - Continue to draft Audit Training Course in collaboration with the Audit-Data Analysis Work Group.
  - Initiate template for the Real Estate-Leasing Training Course.
- b. Training Work Group Members:
  - Training Handbook: Prior to the January 2026 meeting, all Work Group members should review the training handbook and make notes for discussion. Remember to consider grievance procedures during your review.
  - Participant Grievance Procedure: Work Group member Fernandez will focus on this area of the handbook.
  - FOIA: Work Group member Marpe will work with Training Specialist Hufcut to complete the FOIA Training Course.
  - Internal Policies: Work Group Chair Ahneman will work with Staff Attorney Felman to produce a draft for the January 2026 meeting.

Mr. Fernandez recommended that we consider recommending changes to legislative language of our agency's statute that can help the processes move forward in the biennium. We need to ensure that the language is modernized to reflect changes such as internet and artificial intelligence (AI). Chair Ahneman agreed and believes that every Work Group should weigh in on the legislative changes required and will recommend that to the Board that they do.

- 11. Adjournment:** Having no further business to discuss,  
A motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:56 p.m. was made by James Marpe.  
The motion was seconded by Donna Karnes.  
The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Aleshia M. Hall  
Administrative Assistant