# 2023-24 AELA Distance Learning

## (Insert Fiscal Agent Name)

### Introduction

To ensure educational and workforce services are provided at the highest levels of quality for the Adult Education and Literacy Act (AELA), the Office of Adult Education Initiatives (AEI) requires the following assurances.

Applicants are required to sign and agree to these assurances in order to be eligible and considered for AELA funding. Agreement to these assurances ensures applicants commit to follow federal and state laws regarding AELA.

### Distance Learning Assurances

To align with instructional priorities and meet the needs of adult learners across the state, the Office of Adult Education Initiatives (AEI) has developed the following distance learning assurances based upon National Reporting System (NRS) guidelines, which are applied to AELA grantees.

### 1. Course Requirements

Distance learning courses must match traditional, face-to-face, or brick and mortar, courses in terms of the quality, rigor, and breadth of academic and technical standards. The grantee must ensure that programming is of sufficient intensity (such as hours of instruction per month) and duration (the months of engagement in services)[[1]](#footnote-2) for students to make progress toward the grant outcomes.

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The program must ensure timeliness of its responses (synchronously or asynchronously) to the requests of learners participating in distance learning by requiring program staff to respond to requests from these learners within 24 hours of receipt of the request within the program’s business hours.

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### 2. Distance Learning Approvals

Grantees must complete and submit an online AEI Distance Learning application to the AEI Office before using any distance learning tools or platforms they plan to implement at any point within the program year. Instructions for the distance learning application and a link to the application are included in the [Distance Learning section of the AEI website.](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeadult/grantees/handbook/distance-learning) Once a platform is approved for use during a grant cycle, annual reapplication is unnecessary unless the grantee’s implementation of the distance learning tool or platform changes, in which case the grantee must re-submit the application for approval of the changes. AEI may reject any applications where the required description or evidence is insufficient, or the resource does not provide CCRS-aligned adult education instruction.

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### 3. Administering Assessments to Distance Learners

If the grantee selected EFL gain as an educational outcome, the program must ensure that pre- and post-tests used to measure educational gain of distance learners for NRS reporting are delivered in person or remotely and follow the test administration requirements outlined in the state Assessment Policy.

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**Not Applicable: \_\_\_\_\_**

If the grantee selected EFL gain as an educational outcome, distance learners must be post-tested after the same amount of instructional time as other learners unless otherwise indicated in the local Assessment Assurances. Instructional hours to determine post-test eligibility can be a combination of in-person contact hours and distance learning hours. Homework is not included in reportable hours. Homework does not extend the instructional activities by introducing new content, but rather serves as a review or practice of content that has been previously introduced.

**\_\_\_\_\_** The grantee is not providing distance instruction aligned to the NRS assessments/CCR and ELP Standards as part of the AELA grant.

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If providing distance instruction aligned to the NRS assessments/CCR and ELP Standards, the grantee must ensure that learners are able to meet the required hours of instruction for post-testing (as outlined in the Local Assessment Assurances) within a given term.

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### 4. Measuring Instructional Hours for Distance Learners

For AELA programs tracking attendance in classes, the program must decide how distance hours are tracked and reported depending on the model(s) approved for each distance learning platform or instructional tool. Two models for tracking distance learning proxy hours are available:

* 1. Clock Time Model
* Distance learning hours are assigned based on the elapsed time that a learner is connected to, or engaged in, an online or stand-alone software program that tracks time. The software has business rules in place to time out/log out learners after a specified period of inactivity. Hours must be reported at the daily level. No more than 8 clock time model hours a day may be recorded for distance learners.
  1. Learner Mastery Model
* Distance learning hours are assigned based on the learner passing a test on the content of each lesson or unit of instruction. Learners work with instructional materials and take a test when they are prepared. A high, or passing, percentage of correct answers (typically 70%-80%) earns the credit hours attached to the material covered in the instructional unit. Only programs with approval from the AEI Office to report mastery model instructional hours may do so in LACES. Hours may be reported in aggregate but must be reported no less than every 89 days.

**\_\_\_\_\_** The grantee is providing distance instructional hours tracked in classes as part of the AELA grant.

**\_\_\_\_\_** The grantee is not providing distance instructional hours tracked in classes as part of the AELA grant.

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The grantee understands that both in-person and distance learning instructional hours tracked in classes must be recorded in LACES. The program must record distance learning hours in LACES as “Instruction - Distance Learning – Subject Area” or “Instruction – Distance Learning – Async. – Subject Area” choosing the subject area most appropriate to the content covered.

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For AELA programs tracking attendance in workshops, the program must decide how distance hours are tracked and reported depending on the model(s) approved for each distance learning platform or instructional tool. The Clock Time and Learner Mastery models outlined above for tracking distance learning proxy hours are available.

**\_\_\_\_\_** The grantee is providing distance instructional hours tracked in workshops as part of the AELA grant.

**\_\_\_\_\_** The grantee is not providing distance instructional hours tracked in workshops as part of the AELA grant.

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The grantee understands that both in-person and distance learning instructional hours tracked in workshops must be recorded in LACES. The program must record distance learning hours in LACES as “Workshop - Distance Learning” or “Workshop – Distance Learning – Async.”

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The grantee understands that distance learning instructional hours tracked using the ‘Clock Time Model’ must be recorded in LACES at the daily level and no less than one week after instruction takes place. Partial hours must be reported in 15-minute increments only.

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The grantee understands that distance learning instructional hours tracked using the ‘Mastery Model’ must be recorded in LACES as aggregate hours no less than every 89 days. Partial hours must be reported in 15-minute increments only.

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### 5. Accessibility of Distance Learning Platforms

Grantees must ensure that all online courses and websites are accessible. As defined by the ADA under Title II: [Web accessibility](https://www.w3.org/WAI/) means that websites, tools, and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them. More specifically, people can: perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the Web. [Course accessibility](https://er.educause.edu/articles/2017/1/ada-compliance-for-online-course-design) as indicated by EDUCAUSE, means that an individual with a disability is given the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability.

**Initial: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Distance Learning Coordinator Name**

**Distance Learning Coordinator Signature Date**

**Program Director Name**

**Program Director Signature Date**

1. Comings, J. (2007). Persistence: Helping adult education students reach their goals. *Review of Adult Learning and Literacy*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)