



# Caregiver Training

July 2023

## Vision

**Caregivers across the province are provided consistent, evidence-based, responsive training that is accessible, flexible, competency-based, culturally informed and relevant to caregiving.**

Caregiver Training aligns with current research, legislation, policy, Indigenous worldview and practices such as the Practice Framework, Signs of Safety, the Four Areas of Connection, and trauma-informed approaches. The in-service training consists of modules that are eLearning or virtual trainer led classes. They consist of modules that are licensed through Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) or Alberta-specific classes created for our caregivers.

## Caregiver Training Model

Provincial Caregiver Training uses a blended approach incorporating online training modules through PRIDE e-learnings, Alberta-developed e-learnings, as well as instructor-led courses facilitated online by the PCTT. The model includes Pre-Service, Kinship and In-Service training.

## Provincial Caregiver Training Team (PCTT)

Provincial Caregiver Training is administered and delivered by the Provincial Caregiver Training Team. The PCTT:

- Registers new applicants into PRIDE Pre-Service training and provides trainer led learning check ins,
- Registers new applicants into Kinship Orientation Training (KOT)
- Provides enrollment and technical support for PRIDE online learning management system (LMS)
- Facilitates instructor-led virtually delivered Caregiver In-Service modules

## Competency-Based Model

Caregiver Competencies were developed in Alberta in 2020 through a collaborative process involving caregivers, the Alberta Foster and Kinship Association (AFKA), Children and Family Services, Agency, and Delegated First Nations Agency (DFNA) representation. The competencies identify the skills and knowledge required for successful caregiving and have been incorporated into the caregiver training model.

## Caregiver Competencies

1. Supporting children, youth and families with historical trauma, loss and grief
2. Maintaining a child or youth's culture
3. Collaborating for successful transitions
4. Responding to the demands of the caregiving experience
5. Working in collaboration with Children and Family Services
6. Building relationships with the child or youth's family
7. Identifying and promoting the child/youth's development

## Learning Pathway

To support the growth and development of new caregivers to meet these competencies, a Learning Pathway has been created to help guide the way. The Learning Pathway and associated evaluation tools will be used to identify demonstrated competencies and outline a plan to meet all of the competencies identified for successful caregiving.

## Pre-Service Training

The caregiver training journey will begin with PRIDE Pre-Service. PRIDE Pre-Service focuses on helping kinship, foster and legal permanency applicants understand what the caregiving experience is like as well as what is expected of caregivers in Alberta. It will help applicants decide if they are ready to become a caregiver.

- Consists of 10 e-learning sessions that participants take at their own pace
- Required for foster care and legal permanency applicants
- Uses self-reflection questions which creates an e-book from participants responses for each session
- Incorporates an ongoing mutual assessment process, whereby applicants assess their motivation and readiness, and Children and Family Services assesses suitability for the caregiving experience
- Includes virtual check-ins with the applicants and facilitators to support learner transfer

## Kinship Training

Kinship Caregivers are required to take the following training:

1. Kinship Orientation Training eLearning:
  - a. Kinship-specific training designed to meet the unique needs of kinship caregiving
    - Consists of 19 units and will take approximately 8 hours to complete
    - Includes essential information about expectations, working within systems, challenges and strategies specific to kinship caregiving
2. The Foundations of Caregiver Support part I and part II
3. Safe Babies (if caring for children 3 years and younger)
4. First Aid (provided through region)

## In-Service Training

In-Service training is required for all approved foster caregivers. Kinship caregivers and legal permanency families are invited to take the training as well.

In order to access this training, caregivers will self-enroll through PRIDE Online. The course catalogue will include a blend of PRIDE e-learning modules, Alberta e-learning modules and Alberta-specific instructor-led modules:

- Seven PRIDE e-learning modules (which include several sessions per module)
  1. The Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children and Youth
  2. Positive Discipline Strategies to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs
  3. Sexuality Through the Ages and Stages of Development

4. Supporting Relationship Between Children, Youth and Their Families
  5. Working in Collaboration with the Case Team
  6. Promoting Children and Youth's Personal and Cultural Identity
  7. Managing the Caregiving Experience
- Alberta e-learning modules
    - Safe Babies
    - Caring for Indigenous Children
    - Foundations of Caregiver Support for Caregivers (FCSC) part I
  - Alberta-specific Instructor-led modules
    - Consists of In-Service modules that are currently being offered virtually. Provide an opportunity for caregivers to connect virtually from around the province to share learning and experiences

## FAQs

### 1. Who needs to take PRIDE Pre-Service?

PRIDE Pre-Service is required for all legal permanency and foster care applicants.

### 2. How do applicants access PRIDE Pre-Service Training?

Applicants cannot access PRIDE Pre-Service on their own. Applicants must be referred by program staff who send a referral to the PCTT. This registration includes the full name, mailing address, email address and phone number, as well as the region and program type for *each applicant*. The admin team will enroll the applicant(s) into PRIDE and register them into Pre-Service. It is important to note that each applicant is required to have their own unique email address.

The applicant will receive an automatic email from CourseMill (PRIDE Online) with a link to the training modules, a User ID and a password. The applicant will also receive an email from PCTT with the Privacy of information collection notification, the Student Handbook, and a calendar of upcoming learning check in dates.

### 3. What is the expectation around completing PRIDE Pre-Service?

Applicants have 12 weeks to complete PRIDE Pre-Service. There are 10 sessions that take approximately 35 hours to complete, as well as two mandatory virtual check-ins. An applicant will complete session 1-5 of the e-learning, and then complete a learning check-in. The second learning check-in will take place once the applicant has completed session 6-10. Applicants will receive a certificate at the completion of the 10 sessions and the 2 learning check-ins. If an applicant has not completed in that timeframe, program staff will follow up with them to determine next steps.

When Pre-Service is completed, the applicant is responsible to forward their completion certificate to their program staff, which notifies program staff that the applicant is ready to move to Home Assessment. Program staff will notify PCTT whether or not the applicant is approved and requires access to In-Service Training.

#### **4. What is the Mutual Assessment Process?**

The mutual assessment process encourages applicants to carefully consider their interest and readiness to become caregivers. Applicants respond to questions in their e-learning, which creates an e-book that is saved for their future reflection. This e-book is a way for the applicant to reflect on the realities of the caregiving experience during PRIDE Pre-Service. At the same time, Children and Family Services is assessing whether the caregiver is ready and adequately skilled for the caregiving experience through discussing participants' learnings during the two mandatory live virtual check-in sessions.

#### **5. How are PRIDE e-learning modules facilitated?**

PRIDE uses an online delivery model of e-learnings, which is navigated by the student at their convenience. The 'hosts' or trainers of PRIDE are video recorded and provide narration and direction throughout the e-learning. The training includes a variety of resources, videos, interactive and reflective learning activities and a workbook for participants. Participants respond in the training and their answers are saved into what is called an e-book. This is a resource they can download and save on their computer or print out for future reference. Program staff can also request the review the resource as part of their ongoing assessment of caregivers.

#### **6. Will I be required to take PRIDE In-Service training?**

If you are a new foster caregiver, you will be required to complete all In-Service training which includes PRIDE e-learning modules, Alberta-specific e-learning modules and Alberta instructor-led modules.

If you are a current caregiver, you will work with your program staff to determine what training might be required or recommended for your learning pathway.

If you are a kinship caregiver, you are invited, but not required, to take In-Service modules (with the exception of the Foundations of Caregiver Support Class and Safe Babies if you are caring for children three years or younger).

If you are an approved legal permanency caregiver, or a caregiver receiving Supports for Permanency (SFP), you are invited to take In-Service modules, but they are not mandatory.

#### **7. How long do caregivers have to complete their In-Service training after being approved as caregivers?**

Completion of In-Service training is required within the first four years *after* being approved to foster, as policy currently indicates. The accessibility of training has improved significantly and training is considered mandatory to successful caregiving.

#### **8. Will caregivers continue to require a certain amount of training hours per year?**

Yes. Caregivers will be required to complete all of their In-Service training within four years of initial licensing, this will require them to complete approximately 36 hours per year. Once In-Service training is complete, foster caregivers are required to complete a minimum of 12 hours of approved training each year. This training may include new mandatory training.

## **9. How do caregivers access In-Service Training?**

Caregivers are registered into the CourseMill LMS, where they will access training through PRIDE Online. PRIDE Online is where caregivers will be able to view and access all available In-Service training from the course catalogue. This includes PRIDE e-learning modules, Alberta created e-learning modules, and registration into instructor-led modules.

Once registered, caregivers will receive an email from [CS.CaregiverTraining@gov.ab.ca](mailto:CS.CaregiverTraining@gov.ab.ca) with the PRIDE Online link, UserID and a password. When self-enrolling into a curriculum or course, they will receive an automatic email from CourseMill confirming their enrollment.

## **10. Does PRIDE Online bridge tracking with the Child Intervention Case Information Online (CICIO)?**

PRIDE Online does not interface with CICIO. There is a continued expectation that Children and Family Services staff will ensure ongoing manual entry of a caregiver's training history. It is important to ensure it is fully captured on their electronic file on CICIO.

## **11. Is there opportunity for regional caregiver training to be hosted on PRIDE Online?**

All provincially approved caregiver training will be hosted on PRIDE Online. If there is interest in continuing existing or future regional-specific modules, please contact the Provincial Caregiver Training Team.

## **12. Do caseworkers have the ability to log in to PRIDE to access the caregiver's training progress?**

No. Caseworkers will not have access to caregiver profiles. Caseworkers can support their caregivers to print off and provide their training history or if needed they will be able to request a progress report by contacting the Provincial Caregiver Training Team

## **13. How will staff continue to support caregivers with In-Service training?**

Caregiver staff support the growth and development of caregivers through regular evaluation, providing feedback, guidance and direction while caregivers are developing their competencies. Resources have been provided on the Caregiver Competencies and how to support learning and development through the Learning Pathway, including understanding training content and tools to evaluate competency.

## **14. How will caregivers be supported if they do not have internet, a computer, or comfort using either of these?**

Transitioning caregivers to virtually facilitated training has been occurring since spring 2020, in response to COVID-19 restrictions. Progress has been made; however, further work will be required to address areas with more complex needs. As concerns arise, caregiver program staff will assess the needs and create a plan to ensure that all applicants and caregivers have access to training. Once the needs have been assessed, program staff can approach PCTT for assistance in working out the details.

## **15. Are there changes to the requirements for supplemental training?**

Level 1 caregivers have four years to complete In-Service training, with no additional supplemental training required. Once they have completed their In-Service training, foster caregivers are required to complete a minimum of 12 hours of approved training each year. This training may include new

mandatory training.

**16. Do caregivers have to take the updated Alberta-specific modules if they've taken them before?**

It is important that caregivers have access to the most relevant and current information available in order to be successful in their caregiving journey. Caregivers will work with their program staff to determine their learning pathway. This may include taking Alberta-specific modules if the module has been significantly updated to reflect current evidence-based research, policies and practice. These modules count toward required annual training hours.

**17. Who is responsible to keep track of training records?**

Caregivers are responsible for keeping an accurate record of their training. Whenever they complete a training, they are encouraged to forward a copy of the completion certificate to program staff as a way to share their training accomplishments. Program staff and caregivers will continue to review their training yearly as part the Annual Evaluation, as well as update CICIO to ensure that all of the caregiver's training is recorded and up to date.

Caregiver Training continues to evolve in response to program policies and recommendations. Questions and feedback are welcome and will be addressed throughout the implementation process. The Provincial Caregiver Training Team can be reached at [CS.CaregiverTraining@gov.ab.ca](mailto:CS.CaregiverTraining@gov.ab.ca)