POLICY STATEMENT
Each program is required to maintain well-trained instructors, tutors, case managers and administrators by supporting their participation in quality professional development that is linked to program improvement, quality educational services, and increased student learning gains.

PURPOSE
Agencies are charged with building a strong foundation of research and educational practice and will effectively employ advances in technology, as appropriate. Program staff will engage in professional development activities to improve their effectiveness in teaching students the skills necessary to achieve learning gains and successfully transition to employment and/or postsecondary education/training. Program administrators will support job-embedded professional learning so that educational staff can implement new knowledge and measure its impact on student outcomes.

GUIDANCE
The goal of job-embedded professional development is continuous program improvement to achieve quality programming and improved services to students. Effective job-embedded professional development involves ongoing commitment to supporting high-quality professional development activities, implementation of new knowledge in educational practice, and measuring the impact of such job-embedded professional development. Effective professional development is integrated into organizational goals and supported by the organizational structure.

Professional development includes formal and informal means of assisting practitioners in:
- Acquiring knowledge, skills, approaches, and disposition;
- Exploring new or advanced understandings of content, theory, and resources; and
- Developing new insights into theory and its application to improve the effectiveness of their current practice and lead to professional growth.
The Division of Adult Education’s Professional Development System (PDS) supports agencies by addressing professional development needs and goals through the delivery of consultation and direct services. Use of the PDS by agencies is strongly recommended.

PLANNING
- The Program Improvement and Professional Development Worksheet (PI/PD Worksheet) reflects an integrated planning process and is developed by the program professional development team with support from the lead consultant. (Refer to Guidelines, Section 215 for required composition of program professional development team.)
- Input into the worksheet is diverse and comprehensive, including review and coordination by the Program Improvement Team (PIT). (Refer to Guidelines, Section 215 for required composition of program PIT.)
- The program budgets time and resources for professional development in the annual grant applications.
- Each staff member working in an administrative, direct service, or student support capacity must be provided with paid release time to participate in and reflect on professional development activities. The PI/PD Worksheet should reflect the professional development activities of all staff.
- The program administrator and the in-house professional development specialist work with practitioners to develop plans that include professional development activities that align with the program’s overall plan.
- All plans must be reviewed, revised, and evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the program year.

IMPLEMENTATION
- Administrators must play a lead role in participation in and support of professional development. Administrators must ensure that program improvement efforts support quality instruction and are put into practice.
- Staff new to the field must complete appropriate division-approved orientation to the field of adult and family literacy within their first year of employment. Waivers to this requirement should be discussed with the program’s Lead Consultant and approved by the Division Advisors.
- A minimum of one staff member (preferably an EL/Civics instructor) from each EL/Civics contractor must complete the EL/Civics Online Course as offered through the professional development system.
- Program-specific staff orientation should be provided to new staff.
- Practitioners must participate in professional development that is related to their adult education job duties and improves the quality of instruction.
- All practitioners must be provided with release time to participate in professional development activities, with payment commensurate with their status.
- Each program must have an in-house professional development specialist with current or prior adult education teaching experience. This person must have time dedicated in his or her schedule to meet the duties of the position.
- In-house professional development specialists should work with the program administrator and practitioners to ensure that knowledge and skills gained from professional development is implemented at the worksite, follow-up work is completed, and the results are documented.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION
- Programs must maintain records of staff professional development.
- Programs must create a PI/PD Worksheet.
- Programs must email PIT meeting minutes to their advisor.
- Programs should assess the impact of professional development on the classroom activities and student outcomes.
- Practitioners should assess the quality of professional development services as well as their own learning.
- The PI/PD Worksheet should be reviewed throughout the year and modified based on participant input and the program PIT.
- Practitioners must complete on-line evaluations of PDS activities to ensure recognition of completion.

**Note:** In cases in which a staff member does not complete a professional development activity for which a professional development provider has incurred a cost, a program may be required to reimburse the provider for those costs. Such reimbursement will have to be paid with non-grant funds (i.e., programs cannot use funds from grants received from the Division of Adult Education to pay required reimbursement).