

Training in the Age of COVID-19: AAS Guidelines

Initial Volunteer Training and First Volunteer Recertification

- We recommend conducting the classroom portion online and the field portion in-person

Classroom portion

- Conduct the classroom portion online via a video conferencing software (e.g. Zoom meeting)
 - We suggest no more than 10 participants to ensure everyone can contribute
- If you would like to conduct the classroom portion in-person:
 - Follow AAS social distance sampling guidelines, found [here](#)
 - Conduct the session in an outdoor space
 - e.g. pavilion, amphitheater, or covered patio
 - Send the powerpoint presentations to the participant prior to the workshop
 - Consider bringing printed copies of the powerpoint to give to each participant
 - Wear gloves when handling the printed copies

Field portion

- Conduct the field portion in-person, outside while social distancing
 - Follow AAS social distance sampling guidelines, found [here](#)
 - Meet at a publicly accessible stream in your area
 - Limit the number of participants to 10 or less per field session
 - If two trainers are available, consider splitting participants into two smaller groups
 - To minimize contact via shared equipment:
 - Bring enough equipment so each person has their own
 - Prepare, sanitize and separate equipment before participants arrive

Test

- Administer the QA/QC certification test in-person after the field portion
 - Use gloves and sanitize writing utensils when administering written tests
 - Consider conducting a one-on-one oral exam if the group is small

*Note: If a potential participant feels uncomfortable with group training, consider meeting with them individually, or contact state staff and we can arrange a training.

Second Volunteer Recertification +

- We recommend conducting the workshop entirely online via a video conferencing platform (e.g. Zoom meeting)

Classroom and Field Portion

- At the beginning of the workshop, send the editable PDF sign in sheet to participants to fill out
- Limit the number of participants to 5
- Volunteer demonstrations substitute for the field portion
 - Prior to the workshop, assign each participant one field/lab task - they will demonstrate this over video during the 'field' portion of the virtual workshop

- Possible demonstration tasks:
- Chemical - collecting a sample, temperature, pH, titration until fixing, titration after fixing
- Bacterial - collecting a sample, preparing the blank, plating the samples, incubation and counting, disposal
- Macroinvertebrate - muddy bottom sampling methods, rocky bottom sampling methods, handling and sorting macroinvertebrates, macroinvertebrate identification overview, scoring and filling out data form
- Ensure each participant has the equipment necessary to demonstrate their task
 - If this is not possible, talking through the task can substitute for the demonstration at the discretion of the trainer

Test

- Administer the QA/QC certification test electronically
 - Email editable test PDFs at the conclusion of the workshop
 - Ask that they be returned by the end of the day or an agreed upon time

*Note: For the identification portion of the macroinvertebrate QA/QC test, we do not yet have an online test. To administer this part of the test, we ask that trainers meet participants in an open, public space and administer this portion of the test with the test vials. State staff can provide support if trainers are unable to travel.

Important Notes:

- If your outreach work is restricted but you would still like to host a workshop, you can partner with state staff. We can conduct the field portion after you have conducted the online classroom portion. Please get in touch if you are interested in this option.
- If you do not have enough equipment to properly social distance during the in-person field component, please reach out to state staff and we can help.
- We will hold classroom portions of the chemical, bacterial and macroinvertebrate workshops as sessions during Confluence. At these sessions, we will encourage participants to reach out to their local coordinators if they would like to conduct the field portion and take the certification test.