



# INSTRUCTOR CERTIFICATION

## OVERVIEW

The National Highway Institute (NHI) offers a certification program to provide, oversee, and continuously improve the application of quality for instructor skills and adult instructional techniques. The NHI Instructor

Certification Program and Certificate of Accomplishment provide evidence of each instructor's credentials satisfying these standards. For candidates to be afforded the privilege to facilitate NHI training courses in their technical areas of expertise, they must become certified instructors through the NHI certification process.

The certification process is built upon the following set of instructor competencies that are selected from a validated list of the Association for Talent Development (ATD) competencies:

- Application of Adult Learning Theory
- Communication Skills
- Facilitation Trainer Skills
- Positive Behavior Modeling Skills
- Classroom Management
- Subject Matter Expertise

NHI is accredited by the International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and is authorized to issue the IACET CEU.

**CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY:** The NHI Instructor Certification Program is only open to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) employees and FHWA contract employees who have been approved for technical competency and subject matter expertise by the appropriate FHWA Program Office and Resource Center technical managers. In addition, candidates must be actively teaching or preparing to teach NHI courses.

**CERTIFICATION PROCESS:** To achieve NHI instructor certification, instructors must successfully complete the three-step certification process listed below.

## STEP 1: Instructor Development Training

Instructors interested in becoming candidates for certification must show evidence of successful completion of an approved instructor training, FHWA-NHI-420018—Instructor Development Course (3.5-Day). The course provides participants with the knowledge and skills to deliver more effective training and the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to succeed by passing the observation for certification (STEP 3) to become an NHI certified instructor.

At the discretion of the Training Program Manager and the Instructor Liaison, equivalent instructor development courses may be substituted for completion of the NHI Instructor Development Course (IDC) on a case-by-case basis.

Candidates for instructor certification are eligible to continue to the next step of the certification process.

## **STEP 2: Obtain Approval of Subject Matter Technical Expertise from the Appropriate Program Office at the FHWA Headquarters**

Before a certified instructor or a candidate for instructor certification is allowed to facilitate a technical NHI course, they must possess the minimum technical experience requirements set for the course by the

Program Office or Resource Center technical managers and NHI's Contracting Officer Representative (COR). The aforementioned approval is required for each course that an instructor intends to teach for the first time. This step is required to ensure that the instructor can serve as a credible technical facilitator, authority, and resource.

If the Program Office or Resource Center technical manager or NHI's COR has concerns about the performance of a specific contractor or certified instructor or candidate, he/she may require an instructor audition before a panel established by the COR to test the technical and instructional skills required in STEPS 1, 2, and/or 3.

### **STEP 2a: Instructor Audition**

If the COR decides that an audition is required to assess the technical and instructional skills, instructors must submit for approval, a proposed technical topic of the specific courses they intend to facilitate to demonstrate their technical and instructional strengths and skills. Shortly after the auditions, the judging panel will communicate the results of a pass, fail, or required re-audition. If an instructor did not pass, they must re-audition before they can request observation for certification (STEP 3).

Unless otherwise agreed upon with the COR, auditions may take place at NHI's offices in Vienna, VA, or a virtual audition can be arranged. All associated travel and other costs will be the responsibility of instructors/contractors/candidates.

## **STEP 3: Pass Observation for Certification by a Master Trainer**

The next key element to certification is having a master trainer observe candidate instructors during the delivery of properly designed curriculum material to participants. The master trainer will provide immediate feedback to facilitate improvement, if appropriate.

Requests for observation should be submitted at least 1 to 2 months in advance of the desired observation date indicating the technical competency and subject matter expertise as well as course(s) to be taught. After an observation date has been set, NHI will send candidates materials explaining the requirements for certification, along with the criteria against which the instructors will be evaluated. These materials are based on the key concepts demonstrated in STEP 1.

The observation must take place at a regularly scheduled NHI course, not a pilot presentation, and the instructor must present multiple lessons during the course. In preparation for the observation, the master trainer will meet with the approved instructor candidate at the course location to discuss any questions on the requirements for certification or the criteria by which he/she will be evaluated. The observation must encompass six (6) hours of instruction. Throughout the observation, the master trainer will provide feedback during scheduled breaks to discuss good performance areas as well as areas needing improvement.

Upon successfully demonstrating the required competencies and skills in an actual teaching situation, the approved instructor candidate will be awarded NHI Instructor Certification. If, in the opinion of the master trainer, the instructor needs to demonstrate a better grasp and efficient application of the competencies and skills required for certification, a self-improvement plan needs to be developed jointly by the candidate and master trainer. This may include attendance at instructor or other competency development courses. After completing the self-improvement plan, the instructor may request a second observation and pay an observation fee.

**CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE:** NHI staff will review and evaluate information from multiple sources to validate ongoing performance and adherence to the principles upon which certification was granted.

Further, instructors who fail to maintain an average of 4.0 or higher on NHI's instructor evaluations will be required to develop and execute a self-improvement plan after which they will need to be observed by a master trainer to maintain certification. Failure to act on the improvement plan and observation will result in decertification.

**CERTIFICATE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT:** After completing STEPS 1–3 and achieving certification, certified instructors will receive an official Certificate of Accomplishment from NHI.

**COURSE ENROLLMENT:** Customers can login, enroll, and pay their individual fees via the NHI Web site at [www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov). FHWA participants should register via the NHI Web site by logging in through UPACS.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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