



Invitation to Apply for the Capacity Building Institute (Year 9)

AUDIENCE

The Capacity Building Institute (CBI), offered by the Office of Developmental Programs and the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, provides an in-depth learning opportunity to professionals across the entire service partnership including direct support staff and supervisors, supports coordinators/case managers and supervisors, agency trainers, managed care organizations, behavior specialists, psychiatrists, professional counselors and therapists, and dual diagnosis treatment teams. CBI participants represent a wide range of agencies including Direct Support Providers, Supports Coordination, State Hospitals, State Centers, Adolescent Residential Treatment Facilities, Autism Supports, Education, Resources and Training Centers, Administrative Entities, and the Health Care Quality Units.

PURPOSE

Many people feel at a loss as to how to best provide support to individuals with a dual diagnosis (individuals with Intellectual Disability and/or Autism with co-occurring mental health issues, and challenging behaviors) to lead healthy, happy, and meaningful lives. Current best practices and supportive models that have shown how to be most helpful are sometimes beyond the reach of people who work directly with individuals with a dual diagnosis. CBI addresses these issues from an individual and systemic level through training, integration of knowledge into practice, and opportunities to build a statewide cohort to work together to effect change and build capacity. The participants will share individual best practice experiences leading to recommendations to ODP and OMHSAS to facilitate a more effective delivery of services across systems.

DISCUSSION

The Capacity Building Institute will meet for nine, two-day sessions beginning October 2025 and ending in May 2026. Three sessions will be live, in-person and six will be live, virtual on

Zoom. There is no option to attend virtually when the session is live, in-person. Start and end times differ and are provided on page 3.

Information on how to express interest in participating, session information and requirements are identified on pages 3 and 4.

Directed by Gregory Cherpes MD, ODP Medical Director, and Dr. Beth Barol, CBI brings together a select group of professionals to learn with a faculty of national experts and speakers. CBI training is presented by the Co-Directors of the Institute in conjunction with an array of highly experienced practitioners and innovators in the field.

Training topics include overviews of the following selected topics:

- One-page descriptions
- Healing lifestyle and social therapy
- Biographical timelines
- The impact of trauma
- Psychotherapeutic interventions, including Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and biofeedback
- Psychopharmacology and diagnosis
- Creative and expressive therapies
- Functional Behavioral Analysis

SESSION INFORMATION, COST, REQUIREMENTS, AND EXPRESSING INTEREST

CBI Year 9 will be held on-site at The Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in State College for the October 2025 session, on-site at PaTTAN Central in Harrisburg for the April and May 2026 sessions and virtually using the Zoom platform for the other sessions. There is no option to attend virtually if the session is being conducted live, in-person. Please note that there are two virtual sessions occurring in January 2026.

2025 – 2026 Session Dates

- 10/10/25 – Zoom (2 – 3pm)*
- 10/22 and 10/23/25 – The Penn Stater, State College
- 11/13 and 11/14/25 – Zoom
- 12/4 and 12/5/25 – Zoom
- 1/7 and 1/8/26 – Zoom
- 1/28 and 1/29/26 – Zoom
- 2/25 and 2/26/26 – Zoom
- 3/25 and 3/26/26 – Zoom
- 4/7 and 4/8/26 – PaTTAN Central, Harrisburg
- 5/19 and 5/20/26 – PaTTAN Central, Harrisburg

Session Start and End Times

- Live, in-person sessions at State College and Harrisburg – Day 1 (10 AM – 5 PM), Day 2 (8:30 AM – 2:30 PM)
- Live, virtually session held in Zoom – both days (9 AM – 4 PM)

* The live, virtual opening session is scheduled for one hour in Zoom.

Tuition

The cost to participate in the Capacity Building Institute is \$300, which must be paid prior to the first CBI session in October. As a part of your paid tuition, coffee and a breakfast snack each morning, lunch, and an afternoon coffee break with snacks will be provided. Dinner will be on your own.

Lodging

You are free to make reservations at the hotel of your choice. A guest room block will not be provided at either the State College or Harrisburg locations.

Requirements

The Capacity Building Institute emphasizes the participation and collaboration of all participants. Structured group work participation and assignments, 100% attendance, and a final project are required. Meeting with other participants and working outside of session time may be required to prepare the final project. Only the selected Applicant can attend CBI; no substitutions are permitted.

Live, Virtual Meetings

Participants must have access to a computer, camera, and microphone. Participants are expected to be visible on camera during all CBI sessions.

Expressing Interest/Application Process

Each person must complete the [CBI Year 9 Interest Survey](#) by September 16, 2025, to express interest and confirm their ability to attend all sessions. There are a limited number of spaces available for participants. Applicants will be notified by email as to their admission status.

Watch a video to hear about the [CBI experience from a former participant](#).

For more information, contact Marlanda Smith at marlsmith@pa.gov.