



Association of Social Work Boards

ACE Resource

Online Security in Distance Education

Identity Verification

Audio Visual Course: Course material should be sent directly to the participant.

Some providers require students to return a signed form verifying that he/she is the individual who personally completed the course.

Email, address, license number and telephone numbers are matched for verification. License numbers can be verified with state licensing board.

Online Course: Database should be password protected. Student course and performance information must be maintained by the provider and must be secure for confidentiality. -Credit card information must be handled by a secure method, which does not allow information to be shared or collected by the provider.

-Synchronous course or activity: Teachers and students participate at the same time using “real time” methods such as videoconferencing.

-Asynchronous course or activity: Participants work at their own pace and on their own time.

Web site security Access to a participant’s file must be protected by password or some other secure method. Credit card transactions must be processed on a secure payment site.

“HTTPS” (instead of "http") in the web address indicates that the site is being processed on a secure server to protect confidential credit card information submitting information over the Internet. “HTTPS” incorporates a Secure Socket Layer to handle secure internet transactions. Information may be stored on in https format or in a virtual private network.

Additional security procedures may include:

-During registration, the participant can be asked a few non-invasive personal questions with answers known only to the student. After course completion, questions can be used to verify identity.

-Participant registering to take a course can be issued a user ID based on their name and social security number. Participant then creates own pass code. These pass codes are the only means by which they can process their certificates of completion. Only the Director has access to these pass codes, individual test results and number registration data.

Password protection: “Password protected” is used on “log-in pages”. Password protection is effective at the website, but not when information is transmitted. OK method as long as no identity information is required, such as SS#, birth date or credit card #