



Options for Training Stride During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Many Stride Trainers are asking, “*Can we still train Stride during the COVID-19 Pandemic?*” The answer is an enthusiastic, Yes!

This may be a great time to engage in a learning opportunity, but you will need to do some things differently to ensure physical distancing and safety.

Many of the processes within Stride, such as completing the Train-the-Trainer, registering Learners, and completing the online content, will require no adjustments as these can all be done online. However, there are two Stride processes that require in-person components and therefore, need to be adapted during this time.

These include holding **Step meetings** and completing the **Pace requirements**:

1. Step meetings

- These are a very important component of Stride as they are a valuable group learning opportunity. When we are not practicing physical distancing these are best conducted in-person. However, we know this is not the current reality. During COVID-19, we encourage Stride Trainers to use video conferencing/chatting platforms to conduct these meetings.
- Most Stride Learners will have a cell phone or access to a computer, so use the technology available to you and your Learners, and get creative. Some organizations have turned to



using online platforms such as **Zoom**, **Microsoft Teams**, or **Go To Meeting** to communicate and stay in touch with their staff. All of these are great options for hosting Step meetings. We realize some of these types of platforms have a fee attached to their use; however, there are a number of free apps that can be used across a variety of devices. Some of the free apps we found include:

- [FaceBook Messenger](#) (using the group chat feature)
- [Google Duo](#)
- [What's App](#)
- [Slack](#)

Feel free to check out these apps, to see if they will work for you and all Stride Learners.

- Your organization may also be eligible to access technology at a discounted cost through **Techsoup Canada**. Check out this blog for ideas and information about resources that might be useful at this time.
 - <https://www.techsoupcanada.ca/en/community/blog/resources-to-help-your-nonprofit-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>
 - Before choosing any type of app or online program, gain approval from your Executive Director, and communicate with all Learners to ensure they will have what they need to participate.
- The **Step Meeting Guides** are there to support you with ideas for discussions or activities and the majority of the ideas can still be done via a video call. **You can find these in the Stride Train-the-Trainer course in the Resources section** in the Stride Training portal. There are some activities that require Learners to interact in-person, so you may want to wait until physical distancing is no longer required before doing those activities. Just keep track of, and document what you have been able to do during this time, and what still needs to be done when you're able to meet in-person again.



- Be sure to talk to your Learners ahead of time if you plan to have them present any information during the meeting, and ensure they have the technology to do so.

2. Pace requirements

- Completing the Pace requirements involves Stride Learners demonstrating that they understand the content and are applying it in their day-to-day work. Just like the Step meetings, these are best done in-person. However, during COVID-19, there are a few options for working with Learners as they complete the Pace requirements. It is important to note that a Trainer will likely need to use a combination of the following:
 - **Supervisor's assistance** – most people don't work on their own, they work as part of a team, and often there is a supervisor present who can assist. Consider providing a copy of the Pace requirements to the supervisor and asking them if they can be your eyes and ears to confirm that the Learner is implementing the knowledge they have learned.
 - **Virtual meetings** – use video software to meet virtually with each Learner to review their progress in meeting Pace requirements. This should take place after the Step meeting. A copy of the Pace requirements are available in each module workbook. During these meetings, consider having the Learner demonstrate certain Pace requirements. However, if choosing this, please be cautious and ensure that anyone involved (including co-workers or people supported) in this process provides informed consent, according to organizational policy, and is treated with dignity and respect at all times.

It is important to note that once COVID-19 and physical distancing restrictions are over, we look forward to Stride Trainers and Learners being able to return to Step Meeting and Pace requirements that are



conducted in-person. Until then, let's focus on how we can keep learning, training, and helping Stride Learners gain the knowledge they need to best support people experiencing disability.

Remember, SARC is always here to support Stride Trainers, so feel free to reach out to us at sarclearningcentral@sarc.ca. We encourage you to share with us your Stride stories and any creative ways you have been able to meet the needs of Stride Learners during the COVID-19 pandemic.