



DT: November 18, 2008
TO: AARP Driver Safety Program Volunteers
FR: Jai Kundu, DSPMO Director
RE: Important Program Updates from the National Office

*Comments added from
Tennessee State
Coordinator*

The National Office is pleased to share information on four exciting program enhancements. A brief description of each is listed below and supported by enclosed documentation. These updates are important, so read everything carefully. Enclosed you find:

- Classroom course fee increase frequently asked questions
- Online registration for the classroom course frequently asked questions
- 4-hour course expansion project description sheet and frequently asked questions*

NOTE FROM TN STATE COORDINATOR: 4 Hour course is not possible in Tennessee at this time due to State Law—Disregard/Ignore all information on 4 hour course. That program may not be taught until/unless the State Legislature changes the law. Law **REQUIRES 8 hour course.*

The content listed below was taken from the October 10th and October 29th announcement memos that were sent to the DSP leadership volunteers.

1). Flat Rate Reimbursement

At the National Office, your wish is our command. For some time, volunteers in the field have been asking for an increase in the flat rate reimbursement amount. Well, the wait is over! We are thrilled to announce beginning January 1, 2009, the flat rate reimbursement amount for DSP volunteers will **increase to \$30.00!!** The Course & Tuition Expense Report form will be revised to reflect the new rate and additional updates. The revised form will be shared with the DSP volunteer leadership when it is finalized.

2). Classroom Course Fee

The current \$10.00 fee for the classroom course has been in existence since 2000. After careful review, research and discussion with several AARP departments and DSP volunteers, the classroom course fee will increase to **\$12.00 for AARP members** and **\$14.00 for non-members** on January 1, 2009. The differential was made based on data from the online course. 86% of our online course participants are AARP members, partly because they have the opportunity to join before they complete registration and by joining, they pay a lower fee for the course. Another benefit to increasing the classroom course fee is the additional revenue it will generate. The National Office will use the additional revenue to offset some of our new initiatives, such as the increase in the flat rate reimbursement amount for DSP volunteers.

3). Online Registration for the Classroom Course - A New Resource

In looking for ways to move the program to the 21st century, using technology, we have collaborated with the AARP Web Strategies and IT Departments to create a new online registration component for the classroom course. The new registration option will allow course participants to truly register and pay for the classroom course via the internet on AARP.Org.

As you know, the current registration process for the classroom course is handled by volunteers and is a manual process. Currently a potential participant searches for a course on AARP.Org to locate courses in a geographical proximity to them. However, at that point they must call the contact number listed for the course and leave their name as a “registered” participant for that course. There is no consistent process for registration and no consistent role for who registers a participant. Also it is a difficult process to have a complete list of “registered” participants for any given course. Simply stated the current process is a heavy workload driver on the volunteers and the program management staff and results in possible missed opportunities to enroll participants.

The main objective of this new enhancement is to provide users on the AARP.org site with a form to register for a Driver Safety Program classroom instructed course. This form will replace the current manual process of calling an Instructor or sponsor to register for a course. This will assist in creating a more efficient use of the volunteer’s time and resources and will help streamline the registration process for classroom courses offered by the program.

The new process for enrollment has additional multiple advantages. Not only will it increase convenience for participants, it will increase AARP’s ability to cross-sell mobility products and services. Most importantly, given the high level of repeaters for the current DSP course, online registration will get people into the pipeline and capture their contact information so that AARP can market additional mobility products to them as their circumstances change. Finally, it will enable AARP to collect information about course takers prior to their taking a course to understand their needs, interests and motivations. **The new process will be tested in a few states BEFORE being implemented nationwide in 2009.**

Take note: In 2009, the Driver Safety Program will move away from using the word “sponsor” when describing venues that provide space for our course. The Driver Safety Program will move to describing these venues as “hosts”. DSP material will be updated to reflect the new terminology.

4). Four Hour DSP Course Format to Be Introduced in 21 States in 2009 *(N/A for Tennessee—that’s why I have crossed it out, but I wanted you to see the initiative in place)*

In 2009 we will be adopting a 4-hour DSP classroom format rather than our existing 8-hour course format in the following states: AZ, HI, IA, IN, MA, MD, ME, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NM, OH, RI, SD, TX, UT, VT, and VI. These states have either no stipulation regarding a time requirement, a time requirement of 4 hours, or do not have any statute whatsoever regarding the length of driver safety courses.

The reason we are moving toward 4-hour courses is to make our course more appealing to the active and busy lifestyles of today’s course participants. Through this initiative we hope to attract greater numbers of new as well as returning participants. While most states utilizing the 4-hour course format up to this point were doing it for those participants who were “repeating” the course, two states, Kentucky and Wisconsin, began this year to transition to utilizing the 4-

hour course format for courses, whether first time or repeating. The KY and WI State Coordinators realized it would not have made sense to continue with 8 hour courses in these two states as there was no law requiring 8 hours, and it would just be a matter of time before customers would choose the shorter course over the longer one. Therefore, in the states that are adopting the 4-hour format next year, the 8-hour format will gradually be replaced by the 4-hour format throughout your state as soon as everyone in your state is trained in the 4-hour format.

In order to save on training costs, Training of Chief Trainers/Trainers and Regional/State/Deputy/Zone and District Coordinators in the four hour course format will occur via conference calls in November and December, 2008. Training materials, including the special 4-hour Instructor Manual with modified times, will be sent to the participants of the conference call trainings in advance of the conference call dates. The conference call trainings will occur in two tiers. Instructor training in the 4-hour format will occur as a third tier of training during normal spring workshops in 2009.

Promotional Materials Getting the Word Out: Between now and March, 2009, National DSP Staff will be working to develop special promotional materials for the new 4-hour course which may be used by volunteers in conjunction with AARP State Offices to spread the word about the new 4-hour course availability. These 4-hour course promotional materials will be available for volunteers to use from March, 2009 and onward.

Questions/Further Information: See the enclosed "4-Hour Course Expansion Project Description Sheet" for more information and an overview of the project as well as answers to common questions.

Enhancement Conclusion

Change is never easy. We realize the new program enhancements will require all of us to think and operate in new and different ways, and we are counting on your active and positive partnership. We urge you as leaders in this program to assist us in presenting and communicating the steps associated with the enhancements in a positive manner to other DSP volunteers and the community. Our goal is to take the Driver Safety Program to the next level and move it from a *good* program to a *great* program. You are a key ingredient in the positive success we will have.

The National Office staff is currently working on a plan for all four enhancements that will include a communication strategy; material review and revision; training for volunteers and implementation. If you receive feedback and questions from the volunteers in your region or state or from the community, please share them with us. In addition to the plans, we created frequently asked questions which are enclosed. Please forward questions you have or receive to drive@aarp.org and a staff member will respond. Thank you for your leadership and dedication to making the roads safer and helping individuals who are 50+ retain their independence.

Volunteer Expenses

In accordance with AARP policy, all expense statements (standard and course) and invoices must be submitted to the Accounts Payable Department **within 30 days** of the date the expense was incurred in order for the expense to be captured in the proper calendar period. ***Please make sure you submit all of your 2008 expenses prior to December 31, 2008.***