

2013 Programs for Better Living Policy Update FAQs

Below are some commonly asked questions and answers about the Arthritis Foundation Programs for Better Living Policy Update.

For additional questions, please contact Susan Cuellar, scuellar@arthritis.org.

1. What are the general changes Instructors and Facilities need to know about?

- **Co-sponsorship agreement:** This document, previously required for all facilities hosting AF programs, will now be optional, used at the request of the facility or in other special circumstances outlined below. The agreement has been revised, reducing the accountability of the facility and shifting it to the instructor.
- **General Liability:** Leaders/Instructors must carry professional liability insurance unless they can show their employer/facility has comprehensive or professional liability insurance that covers them.
- **Certification process:** Leaders/Instructors will now be certified upon completion of a training workshop. All previous certification documents have been combined into one Certification Application Form, which incorporates the Leader/Instructor Statement of Understanding and Letter of Agreement.
- **Recertification:** Recertification will now be required every two years for all programs.
- **Participant Release Forms:** The Arthritis Foundation will not require that separate Participant Release Forms be collected in situations where such a form is already on file (generally by the facility). In situations where such a form is not on file, the leader/instructor will be responsible for ensuring each participant signs one. Instructor will also be responsible for data collection upon request from the Arthritis Foundation local office due to grant requirements, etc.

2. What changes were made to the co-sponsorship agreement?

The Arthritis Foundation has shifted its focus from the responsibility placed on the partnering facility to more emphasis on leader/instructor accountability. The leader/ instructor is now responsible for ensuring the location or facility provides a safe environment and meets any applicable requirements of the program. The leader/ instructor is now required to carry professional liability insurance coverage with aggregate/single occurrence limit not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) for personal injury or property damage. The only incidence where an instructor would not be required to carry their own insurance is if their employer/facility carries a comprehensive or professional liability insurance policy that would cover them.

The co-sponsorship agreement has been updated to reflect these changes. Although this facility agreement will now be optional, the updated co-sponsorship agreement can be used if requested from a partnering agency or facility or when establishing large system-wide partnerships.

Program Information Forms – These will still be collected from instructors for tracking class locations to assist in marketing the program through the Arthritis Foundation.

3. What changes were made to certification process?

- a) A leader/instructor will now be considered certified upon successful completion of a program training (in-person or on-line) workshop. They are no longer required to teach a series of classes prior to receiving their certification.
- b) The Instructor Training Workshop Application Forms have been merged with the Certification Application Form. One Certification Application Form will now replace the various program instructor workshop training applications. This form will be used either prior to an in-person instructor training or for those who completed the on-line Walk With Ease or Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program instructor trainings.
- c) The Statement of Understanding has replaced the Leader/Instructor/Trainer Letter of Agreement in the Certification Application Form. Changes to the Statement of Understanding now reflect the updated policies and procedures.
- d) Recertification for Arthritis Foundation Aquatics Program, Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program and Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi Program will now be every **two** years. Moving forward, the instructor would be entered into Team Approach as “certified” once they attended a training and completed the Certification Application Form.

These alterations are consistent with many other group physical activity programs procedures.

4. When will the Arthritis Foundation Aquatics and Arthritis Foundation Exercise Programs be updated/revised?

There are tentative plans to update both of these programs within the next 1 -3 year’s dependent upon securing adequate funding. Costs for program and material updates can range from \$25,000 –\$30,000 per program and up.

5. What changes were made to the participant release form requirement?

Many facilities require all members or participants to complete a release form. To eliminate duplicative efforts, leader/instructors will ensure there is a completed form on file for each participant. If the facility does not require such a form, the Arthritis Foundation Participant Release Form can be used.

Additionally, page two of the Participant Release Form has been revised to include standard language for participants in all Arthritis Foundation’s programs and special events.

6. How do these new policies work when someone attends an online training workshop?

The same documents and requirements apply for both in-person and online trainings. Individuals who successfully complete an on-line Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program or Walk With Ease training contacts the local Arthritis Foundation office to complete the Certification Application Form.

7. Where can I find these documents?

O-line at <http://www.arthritis.org/florida/offering-programs-local/> or by call the AF Florida Program office 800-850-9455.

8. When do we have to start using the new paperwork and procedures?

- You can start using the new materials as soon as possible.
- We will continue to honor the current certifications for 3 years.
- Those facilities that have current co-sponsorships on file would remain in place for the remainder of their duration.

9. Where can instructors gain professional liability insurance?

Instructors can obtain professional liability insurance through numerous insurance companies and organizations such as the American Council on Exercise. Prices range from \$125 and up annually.