

InfoSec Academy (ISA) FAQ

- Who is eligible to participate in the InfoSec Academy?
ISA is designed to provide training for cybersecurity staff from state agencies and institutions of higher education. Participants should be employed in positions encompassing cybersecurity, and all participants must receive approval from their organization's CISO/ISO before registration will be confirmed.
- What are the requirements for participation?
Each participant should be employed in a position that encompasses cybersecurity. All participants must be approved by their organization's ISO/CISO.
- How many personnel can attend from one organization?
Each organization can send participants representing 10-20% of their security staff population. Percentage is determined based on the size of the security staff. This is to ensure we can provide training to as many organizations as possible.
- What if I want to train more than 10-20% of my staff?
If an organization would like to train more than 10-20% of their staff, the organization would be responsible for the cost of the certification course and exam voucher for those participants. Learning Tree will honor the same pricing that it offers DIR.
- How many courses can I take?
Participants can take *no more than one course per fiscal year*; however, this does not guarantee a participant can take one course every fiscal year. There are a variety of factors that determine eligibility, the most important being budget and the ability to certify as many security professionals statewide as possible. These factors are not limited to a single fiscal year. If there was not enough budget in a fiscal year for some organization participants to enroll, DIR wants to ensure they have the opportunity in the following fiscal year.
- What costs does DIR cover?
DIR covers the cost of one certification preparation course and the associated exam voucher, per individual, per fiscal year; this does not guarantee a participant can take one course every fiscal year. All materials needed to take the course are included, exam vouchers are optional. DIR also covers the cost for participants to take the updated Texas Policy and Assurance Course.
- Will DIR pay for another exam voucher if I fail?
DIR will provide one exam voucher per participant. If a participant does not pass the exam, the participant, or participant's organization, will be responsible for exam retake costs.
- Will DIR pay for membership fees to professional organizations that offer the certification?
No, membership fees to professional organizations are the responsibility of the participant, or the participant's organization if a program or budget is in place to do so. This includes any certification maintenance fees required after a certification is obtained.

- Can I take a refresher course?
Yes, Learning Tree's 100% Satisfaction Guarantee policy allows participants to retake their course, within 3 months of the first attendance, at no additional cost to DIR or the participants agency. This timeframe ensures a participant can still take the exam, should the participant choose that option, in the allotted period.
- Do I have to take the certification exam?
Participants are not required to take certification exams and do not need to request exam vouchers if they are unsure of their ability to pass the certification exam.
- How do I get my voucher once I have completed my course?
Exam vouchers can be requested directly through the DIR portal. Log-in and select My Courses → View → Scroll down to Industry Certification Exam Info. Make sure to request the exam voucher before the expiration date indicated. After an exam voucher is requested, an email should be received within a few hours, from Learning Tree, with the voucher number and instructions on how to register for the exam. If you have any questions, please contact [Tracy Calvert@learningtree.com](mailto:Tracy_Calvert@learningtree.com) or [Kimberly Carella@learningtree.com](mailto:Kimberly_Carella@learningtree.com).
- How long do I have to request my exam voucher?
Participants have one month from the date of completion of their certification course to request an exam voucher.
- How long do I have to use my exam voucher?
Participants have four months from the date of completion of their certification course to use their exam voucher.
- How do I register for a class?
All course registrations are completed through the DIR portal, which can be found on the [Texas InfoSec Academy Website](#); from there you can create a login, read about, and register for courses. Registration is not official until it is approved by your organization's CISO/ISO, and DIR. If you have any trouble with your registration you may contact DIRsecurity@dir.texas.gov, [Tracy Calvert@learningtree.com](mailto:Tracy_Calvert@learningtree.com), or [Kimberly Carella@LearningTree.com](mailto:Kimberly_Carella@LearningTree.com) for assistance.
- What are the prerequisites for taking a course/exam?
Participants are required to first take the Texas Policy and Assurance Course before taking a certification preparation course. In addition, certifying bodies place requirements on their certifications – those requirements may vary from certification to certification. Participants are responsible for meeting the requirements to become successfully certified after they pass the test. Links to the requirements for certification exams can be found on our website at <https://dir.texas.gov/View-About-DIR/Information-Security/Pages/Content.aspx?id=128>
- What is the Texas Policy and Assurance Course, and am I required to take it?
The Texas Policy and Assurance Course is designed to walk participants through the different state laws regarding cybersecurity, and includes sections on how the legislative cycle works, Texas Government Code, cybersecurity-specific legislation passed in recent sessions, Texas Administrative Code Chapter 202, and reporting requirements.

All ISA participants are required to first take the Texas Policy and Assurance course before taking a certification preparation course. The course is offered as a Computer-Based Training (CBT), although DIR may host live, instructor-led training in the future.

- Does DIR cover the cost of the Policy and Assurance course?
Yes, DIR covers the cost for the Policy and Assurance course.
- I see that there's an Intro to Network and System Security. Can I take this course and then a certification course?
No. ISA maintains that a participant may only take one course per fiscal year. This includes the Intro to Network and System Security course, which is designed for new security staff or staff who are transitioning into security from another role.
- Does the 10-20% rule apply to the Policy and Assurance course?
No, there is no limit for attendance. The Policy and Assurance course is available, at no cost to the organization, to all security staff approved by the ISO. This is only applicable for the Policy and Assurance course.
- What if I need to cancel or reschedule my course?
Participants may cancel or reschedule their course, without any penalties, if notice is given no less than 14 calendar days prior to the start of the participant's course. If there is less than 14 calendar days' notice, a penalty of 50% of the cost of the course will be applied to the participant's organization, unless the participant can find an approved replacement to attend the course.
- How does the cancellation fee work?
If a participant cancels within 14 calendar days of the start of their ISA course, a penalty fee of 50% of the cost of the course will be charged to the participants agency. For example, the ISA course is \$1000. If a participant cancels within 14 days, that participant's agency will be responsible for paying \$500.
- What do I do with my materials if I cannot take the course I intended to take?
If a participant, for whatever reason, is no longer able to attend a course, the materials sent to them from Learning Tree will need to be returned. Should you have questions about this process, please contact Tracy Calvert at Tracy_Calvert@learningtree.com.
- Who do I contact regarding rescheduling or canceling my course?
Please contact Tracy_Calvert@learningtree.com for assistance with canceling or rescheduling your certification course.
- I want to take a cybersecurity class that's not on this list. Are there any options available?
DIR has a cooperative contract with Learning Tree that provides other trainings and courses. Participants may opt to take courses offered through the cooperative contract, however the participant's agency will be responsible for funding the course. For additional information contact Tracy_Calvert@learningtree.com.