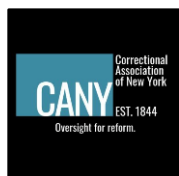




ICRC



The University of Texas at Austin
Prison and Jail Innovation Lab
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs



Training and Resources for Prison Oversight and Monitoring Bodies

Issue 8

25 JULY 2022



NETWORKS
WORKING TOGETHER
EXTERNAL PRISON OVERSIGHT AND
HUMAN RIGHTS



ICPA
International Corrections
& Prisons Association

The Expert Network on External Prison Oversight and Human Rights is committed to bringing together various agencies responsible for external prison oversight to share information and exchange best practices and lessons learned.

For more information about the network and its activities, please visit:

<https://icpa.org/icpa-expert-groups/external-prison-oversight-and-human-rights/>

Cover graphic source: [Vecteezy.com](https://www.vecteezy.com/)

Office of the Correctional Investigator.

60 Queen Street West, Ottawa, Ontario.

Official correspondence can be mailed to the above address. For personal inquiries regarding the Expert Network or the content of this Newsletter, please contact our Deputy Chair, Emad Talisman: Emad.Talisman@OCI-BEC.gc.ca

Welcome from the Chair



Dear Members,

It is my pleasure to present our eighth newsletter, titled, “Training and Resources for Prison Oversight and Monitoring Bodies.” This issue contains a collection of training opportunities, announcement, and other resources that can help external prison oversight bodies increase knowledge, expertise and, ultimately, the credibility and legitimacy of their role and mandate.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the following organizations for their collaboration and for making this newsletter possible: The Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab from the University of Texas at Austin (PJIL), the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), and a coalition of independent oversight bodies in three US states.

External oversight agencies should play an active role in leading, developing, and offering training not only to their own staff, but to the correctional agencies subject to their oversight. For example, in my capacity as Correctional Investigator of Canada, I am involved in a number of such initiatives. On the international front, I am currently supporting the development of IDLO’s curriculum in human rights-based corrections-management training, which you can read about in this issue. Also, though still in its infancy, my office is looking forward to its partnership with APT in developing and offering training on prison inspections. Domestically, I regularly participate as guest lecturer\speaker before a variety of audiences, including university students, academics, prosecutors, judges (National Judicial Institute), and ombuds professionals (e.g., Osgoode Law Development Program). Finally, the Senior Legal Counsel for my Office also teaches Correctional Law and Policy at the University of Montréal, something I also did for many years at Carleton University, Ottawa.

The COVID-19 global pandemic has left its imprint on all facets of human life. One ubiquitous effect has been in how we think and engage with work and education. The exodus from rigid infrastructure and routines to more flexible virtual environments has expanded access and

WELCOME

opportunity for all. Yet, as with any technological advancement, some compromises are made in how we relate to one-another and in the quality of our interactions.

As prison administrations move toward virtual learning platforms for both staff and prisoners, we see fewer human interactions between staff, between prisoners, and between staff and prisoners.

To keep up with this changing reality, oversight agencies must be able to evaluate if prison services are meeting their legal obligation to rehabilitate offenders with tools that are effective at improving correctional outcomes (including reducing recidivism) and contribute to public safety. To this end, oversight bodies must develop internal expertise in the methods, benefits, and limits of virtual learning platforms.

I do hope that you find the information in this issue of our newsletter useful. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or if you would like us to facilitate network connections.

With Gratitude,

Ivan Zinger (J.D., Ph.D.), Correctional Investigator of Canada.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

APT's Global Learning Village for Torture Prevention

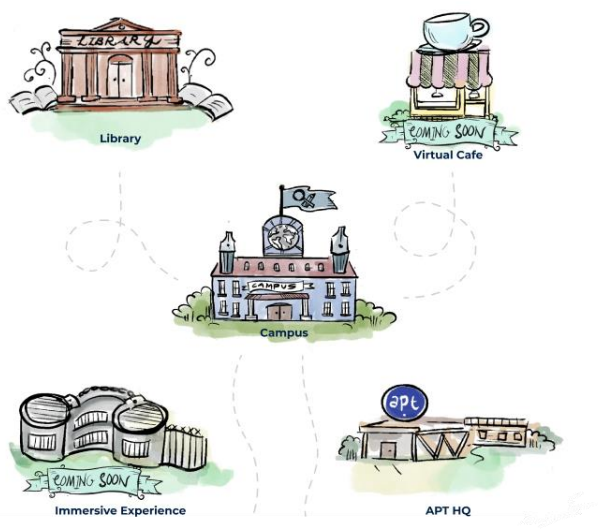


Jasmine Zik-Ikeorha

*Senior Adviser,
Learning, Development and Outreach, APT.*

Working on torture prevention requires specific skills and knowledge that are not often provided as part of the "typical" or traditional training or professional education that all torture prevention professionals undertake. This has been a constant challenge for these oversight bodies and institutions as it limits their capacity to act and fulfil their responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Being aware of these gaps, the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) has been working tirelessly to provide solutions and has developed its capacity building programmes as well as relevant resources to ensure the right information are easily accessible for critical actors in the torture prevention sector. This will contribute to strengthening their capacity and ability to bring about change and prevent torture and any other form of ill-treatment.

As an organisation dedicated to preventing torture, the APT provides expertise to support its partners and key stakeholders in relation to all aspects of their work. This includes institutional building, detention-monitoring methodology, and expert advice on specific detention issues.



TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

Opportunities for Capacity Building with the APT

The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the shift towards a more digital world and the learning & development sector was not left out. As part of APT's strategic plan to scale up and reach out globally through online tools and e-learning, we are committed to sharing to a wider audience and make this expertise and knowledge available to a greater community. Thus, in 2021, the APT launched its [Torture Prevention Learning Village](#) to provide capacity building support to all those working to prevent torture. The Torture Prevention Village was in development prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with ongoing travel restrictions, it is now an essential part of our capacity-building programme and complements our face-to-face training. It also allows us to respond adequately to requests from partners for specific and dedicated support. The Village promotes self-learning; it takes into consideration feedback from participants to support the tailoring of content accordingly and thrives to include examples of good practices from different countries to encourage sharing of experiences as well as promote peer-to-peer exchanges.

E-learning via the Torture Prevention Learning Village

The Village is divided into four parts and registration is required to have full access to all parts of the Village.



1. [LIBRARY](#)

The Library consists of various APT's landmark resources, including [publications](#), [audiovisuals](#) and toolkits to support knowledge for key stakeholders including National Human Rights institutions (NHRIs) and National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs). The library features our [Detention-focus database](#) with key issues such as health or access to families, related to prisons around the world developed from a monitoring and human rights perspective (with special attention to children, minorities, women, persons with disabilities and other groups in situations of vulnerability); as well as analysis, questions and references to key international and regional standards. It also highlights our new [toolkit for NPMs](#), which aims to provide practical guidance to new and established NPMs on their institutional development, activities, organisational models and collaboration with external actors. You can also find so much more in our Knowledge hub including our key monitoring guides on topics such as [monitoring places of detention](#) or introducing a gender-sensitive approach in detention monitoring [here](#).

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

2. [CAMPUS](#) (online courses)

If you are looking to learn more on topics related to torture prevention, the Campus is home to a variety of interactive courses on topics including [Monitoring LGBTI+ people in detention](#), [Gender-sensitive detention monitoring](#) and [Fundamentals of detention monitoring](#). Courses on topics such as the new Principles on effective interviewing (known as the “Méndez Principles”) and on the OPCAT will be published soon.



The Campus offers two types of courses to participants:

- i. **‘Open’ courses (asynchronous, approximately 45mins)** – provides introductory knowledge of topics related to torture prevention and are free and accessible to the public in four languages – English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, upon registration/account creation;
- ii. **‘In-depth’ courses (synchronous and asynchronous)** – tailored for a specific audience mainly partner institutions facilitated by the APT, provides more comprehensive knowledge of key topics related to torture prevention. It includes live sessions, group work exercises and assignments over a specific period.

The Campus aims to *provide opportunities for any institution (including oversight bodies) to train their staff, at little or no cost, on key topics related to torture prevention*. For example, they may be part of the onboarding for staff. They consist of interactive elements such as scenarios, knowledge checks, videos, podcasts and additional downloadable resources to encourage further learning for participants. Participants receive badges and certificates upon achieving the required percentage at course completion. You can begin your learning journey by [creating your account here](#).



3. [VIRTUAL CAFÉ](#) (launches Q3 2022)

Having a forum where course participants can exchange ideas, ask questions and receive feedback is an additional feature that facilitates learning and capacity building. It is for this reason that the Village will host a Virtual café that shall be the forum for discussions on topics relating to the various courses on the Campus as well as to torture prevention in general. Participants will be able to ask

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

questions to experts and colleagues, raise issues they encounter in their monitoring work, provide examples, resources and share their experiences as well as receive feedback on questions that may have arisen in the course or, in the execution of their duties as oversight bodies. The Virtual café promotes peer-to-peer interaction and learning within our virtual community to support both individual and institutional capacity building as well as awareness on issues related to torture prevention. The Virtual café will be launched in the third quarter of the year.

4. [IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE](#) (Coming soon)

Noting how critical application of knowledge acquired is to ensure the achievement of torture prevention, the APT (in collaboration with its partners) is going a step further to develop a platform where participants can apply their knowledge in practice using real life developed scenarios to enhance understanding of their roles and impacts as monitors and/or human rights institutions. To receive information on the launch, don't forget to subscribe to our newsletter [here](#).



Now you know some of the available learning opportunities, we look forward to welcoming you on board our Torture Prevention Learning Village. While you are there, do not forget to provide us with your feedback to tell us how we can make your experience better or what you did/did not enjoy, as we are constantly looking to improve methods and approach! We look forward to seeing you online!

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

Three-State Collaboration on Prison Oversight in the USA



Aidan King is leading an Arnold Ventures funded coalition comprised of The John Howard Association of Illinois (JHA), The Correctional Association of New York (CANY), and the Pennsylvania Prison Society. The Coalition aims to demonstrate and promote good practice in prison oversight in the United States. He is currently the Director of Performance and Impact at the CANY.

[The Correctional Association of New York](#) (CANY, founded 1844), [The John Howard Association of Illinois](#) (JHA, founded 1901), and [the Pennsylvania Prison Society](#) (The Society, founded 1787) are the only state-wide, independent, non-governmental correctional oversight entities in the United States.

The three organizations are engaged in an ongoing partnership to produce good practice models through different approaches and common tools to inform ground level monitoring work, demonstrate the value of civilian oversight, and to allow for direct comparisons between the states. This groundbreaking cooperation facilitates an ongoing exchange between the three organizations on a variety of ancillary topics and produces important lessons for future growth of the oversight field. Our partnership has thrived by embracing the diversity of our approaches. CANY and JHA have primarily worked to effect systemic change through extensive monitoring tours of state prisons. The Society's prison monitoring focuses primarily on responding to individual complaints from across Pennsylvania's prisons and jails. These experiences are then used to inform systemic change advocacy.

The first output of our collaboration was a [major report detailing the nature of the COVID-19 crisis and response in our three states](#). Our reporting demonstrated the potential to draw firm conclusions and make recommendations based on good practice. We have been able to draw important lessons despite variance in



TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

evidence collection methods due to differing models and levels of access. For example, a massive disparity in vaccination uptake rate between Pennsylvania (89%) and New York (49%) in August 2021 can be attributed to a \$25 incentive offered in Pennsylvania. In Illinois, the weekly distribution of KN95 masks from April 2020 stood in sharp contrast to the quality and frequency of distribution in the other two states where this precedent can be cited.

Within this report we highlighted a series of ‘Methodology Case Studies’ detailing replicable examples of good practice including: a system wide survey receiving over 16,000 responses from incarcerated people conducted by JHA in Illinois; an approach to thematic coding of qualitative data on COVID-19 developed by CANY in New York; and the use of a newsletter to survey incarcerated people by the Society in Pennsylvania when COVID-19 restrictions made direct access difficult. These case studies form part of a growing library of resources to be adapted and used elsewhere.

In addition to applying our distinct methods towards common outputs, we will introduce common tools to allow for direct comparison, beginning with an adaptation of the [Measuring the Quality of Prison Life](#) survey, developed at the Prison Research Centre at Cambridge University. The tool will be applied across our three states in 2022, and in early 2023 we will use our data to develop a joint report on relationships between staff and incarcerated people and conclude on lessons-learned on the application of the tool.

New International Advisory Group Steers Global Corrections Curricula, with Support from IDLO and INL



*The **International Development Law Organization (IDLO)** is the only global intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to promoting the rule of law to advance peace and sustainable development. IDLO partners with governments and people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to make justice systems fairer and more effective.*

At any given time in the world, 11.5 million people spend their days behind bars, often pending trial and in overcrowded cells. Prisons operating above their occupancy limits are difficult to manage. In many countries, this translates into corrections systems where international human rights standards and respect for the rule of law are rarely implemented.

To address the situation and build effective and rights-abiding penal systems, the [International Development Law Organization \(IDLO\)](#) is partnering with the U.S. Department of State's [Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs \(INL\)](#) to upgrade the professional skills of prison managers through human rights-based corrections-management training.

Through the project, Supporting Global Professionalization of Corrections Management Training in line with International Human Rights Standards, IDLO is designing a curriculum to be rolled out by INL in its international corrections training programmes around the world. The training builds on international human rights standards – particularly the Mandela Rules and Bangkok Rules as two of the key standards it will seek to operationalize – and uses advanced adult learning methodologies.

IDLO has established an International Advisory Group (IAG)* with government, institutional, and civil society representatives from Africa, Europe, Latin America, North America, and Southeast Asia, as well as with senior representatives from international organizations, all specialized in penal reform. The IAG will provide overall thought leadership and strategic direction for the design of training materials.

“The IAG brings together some of the finest experts in the world committed to advancing correctional excellence,” says INL Deputy Assistant Secretary, Tobin Bradley. “Their ground-

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

breaking work has the potential to inform the standard for successful reintegration policies and programs globally. That means better outcomes for individuals, communities, and return on government investments.”

Earlier in 2022, IDLO organized meetings with the IAG to build consensus around priority training areas of dynamic security and soft skills. They also identified pressing operational gaps related to prisoners in situations of vulnerability and those with special needs.

Meeting participants noted that adopting a human rights approach to prison management leads to better and fairer decision-making in day-to-day operations. It increases the safety and security of both prisoners and prison staff, and contributes to institutional and cultural change in prison management. Furthermore, the impacts of employing such an approach reach far beyond prison systems; as the IDLO Director of Programmes, Ted Hill, notes: “Corrections officers are on the front line in the penal system, and investing in their professional development has a positive impact on prisoners and society at large.”

Members of the IAG also recommended focussing on the operational applicability of international norms and standards, making the learning experience easily accessible, adaptable and, most importantly, relevant to local contexts.

**IAG members include: Sandra Fernández, Academic Director of the Regional Penitentiary Academy (the Dominican Republic); Olivia Rope, Executive Director of Penal Reform International; Miriam Wachira, Country Director of Justice Defenders in Kenya; Dean Williams, Executive Director of Colorado Department of Corrections; and Ivan Zinger, Correctional Investigator of Canada, among others.*

Announcing the Prison and Jail Innovation Lab!



The University of Texas at Austin
Prison and Jail Innovation Lab
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs

Michele Deitch
Director

Alycia Welch
Associate Director

We are proud to announce the launch of the [Prison and Jail Innovation Lab \(PJIL\) at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs](#) at the University of Texas at Austin. PJIL is a new national policy resource center that serves as a catalyst to ensure the safe and humane treatment of people in custody and that cultivates the next generation of justice policy leaders. This has been a dream of ours for many years, and we are beyond excited to see this dream come to fruition.

PJIL will work on projects around the country to shine a light on conditions of confinement, strengthen and improve oversight, and transform the way we treat people in prisons and jails. We will work closely with policy makers, correctional leaders, advocates, and others to provide research, analysis, and guidance. PJIL allows us to scale the work we have been doing on these issues for decades and thereby have an even greater impact. We will have four areas of focus: transparency and oversight; healthy and safe conditions; women in custody; and youth justice.

PJIL's launch also marks the creation of its signature project, the National Resource Center on Correctional Oversight, which provides guidance and resource materials to policy makers, elected and appointed officials, and advocates across the country interested in developing or strengthening correctional oversight mechanisms in their state or local jurisdiction. The Resource Center will build on our extensive prior work in this area, and we will continue to produce research about effective correctional oversight measures. In the coming months, the Resource Center will also develop a digital repository to track oversight developments and to store resource materials about every correctional oversight entity across the country.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

We have a fantastic team of graduate students working with PJIL to magnify our impact. These students will be the next generation's leaders in this field, and we will be preparing and mentoring them as they become effective policy professionals with expertise on prison issues.

PJIL will also draw on the talents and guidance of an extraordinary Advisory Committee, chaired by Professor Andrea Armstrong of Loyola University of New Orleans College of Law, an expert on jail deaths in custody and the need for improved transparency in corrections. The inaugural Advisory Committee members include: Neelum Arya; Dallas County District Attorney John Creuzot; former Texas prison director Doug Dretke; Lynda Frost; Dr. Michael Hole; Marc Levin; Kimberlyn Leary; Ronald Simpson-Bey; and Jason Wang.

Since launching, we:

- issued multiple reports and journal articles, many with national media attention, on issues such as COVID data transparency, best practices in correctional oversight, and how COVID affects women in custody;
- are in the process of designing and developing a website and digital repository for the National Resource Center on Correctional Oversight, PJIL's signature project;
- launched the Louisiana Jail Standards Project to help the state develop improved jail standards and to propose a jail oversight entity;
- provided guidance to 100+ stakeholders who requested our assistance (many of these inquiries were about developing or strengthening correctional oversight in their state or local jurisdiction);
- gave dozens of presentations both virtually and remotely;
- had hundreds of media appearances on a wide range of issues; and,
- will be hosting in-person and virtual events about conditions in prisons and jails, in the coming year.

We encourage you to explore our website ([Click Here](#)) and learn more about PJIL and our plans for the future. Please sign up for our mailing list on the website, and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

We are grateful for you—our trusted network of colleagues and collaborators—for supporting us as we worked hard to bring this dream of ours to life. Please join us as we embark on this

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

journey together, and help us seek to ensure safer, healthier, and more respectful conditions for people who live and work in prisons and jails.

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!](#)

ICRC's Virtual Prison Training Tool

The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** has been working over the past months towards the creation of an [innovating training tool](#) using virtual reality technology in the capacity building of actors working in detention.



ICRC

This Virtual Prison Multiplayer Simulation will be made available to ICRC staff in the coming months. Moreover, given its potential utility it will be extended to National Prevention Mechanisms (NPMs), penitentiary schools and academies, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and NGOs working in places of detention, and a web-based version will be developed.

Designed as a training, coaching and mentoring tool for colleagues within the ICRC who are involved in detention work, it allows trainees to conduct a full detention visit in a close-to-real prison environment whereby they assess the conditions of detention and the treatment of the prisoners in two complementary ways:

- visually and based on the sounds they hear (observation/experiential learning); and,
- by interacting with prison staff and detainees played by ICRC trainers with extensive detention experience (roleplays with mentors).

Moreover, the videogame will also be used to train detaining authorities on various topics. Thus, the ICRC's Prison System Advisers – former prison managers – are already using footage of the Virtual Prison in training sessions with penitentiary staff. Participants are asked to watch the video and spot elements they observe, which:

- are not compliant with the Mandela Rules (human rights training);
- impact on the safety and security of the prison (safe and secure prisons training); and,
- potentially affect the health/hygiene of prisoners and staff (healthcare in detention training)

There can be many more potential training objectives and intended outcomes given that the Virtual Prison can also serve as a tool for thinking about problem identification, analysis and solutions.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

For instance, trainings could be designed:

- to understand **the principles underpinning prison work** such as the dignity and humanity of detainees and the applicability of minimum human rights standards (Mandela Rules);
- to put in practice **certain technical skills** required for prison work in line with the principles referred to above;
- to become more aware of how poor conditions of detention or treatment of detainees affect the **safety and security** of the prison;
- to implement a **dynamic security** approach, including how to build positive relations with detainees, lower tensions and defuse situations without using force (interpersonal communication skills); and,
- to **identify especially vulnerable detainees** among the prison population and how to protect/assist them (women, children, foreign nationals, persons with disabilities or elderly detainees, detainees with mental health problems, including drug addicts, etc.).

Moreover, in the coming months in close partnership with Red Cross / Red Crescent national societies active in this field, the ICRC will develop a similar Training Tool in an Immigration Detention environment.

Additional Resources & Announcements

ICPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE (2022)

The International Corrections and Prisons Association (ICPA) is holding its annual conference from October 23 to 28, 2022, in Orlando, Florida. This will be its first in-person conference since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and I am hopeful that our network will have a panel this year! For more information about the conference, click here: [2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE INFO](#)



Register before August 31st to take advantage of the Early-Bird Registration rate.

Click here to register [ICPA 2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION](#)

ICPA NETWORK WEBSITE

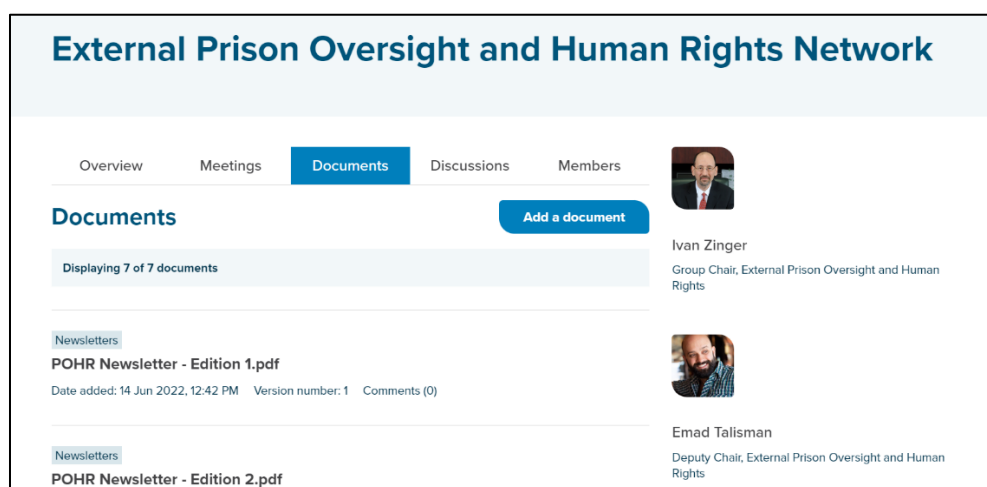
ICPA recently launched a new platform for its Network Groups. Our website can now be accessed by clicking on this link: [EXTERNAL PRISON OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK](#).



TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT

If you have visited this website before, you will notice that our newsletters are no longer listed here for public access. They can now be found in ICPA's [RESOURCE CENTRE](#). Just type "POHR" in the search bar or use the filters on the right to find all of our published newsletters.

That being said, you can also find our newsletters, discussion groups, and future events by [logging into the ICPA website with your existing member account](#). Remember that basic membership with ICPA is free. We are in the process of populating our website with more information and discussion topics, so please stay tuned!



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TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR OVERSIGHT



The Workplace Institute is offering [investigations training](#) and consulting services to public and private sector agencies. Some of these courses are brand new, others cover fundamental investigative building blocks. They have also developed in depth courses on [P.E.A.C.E. interviewing](#), report writing and several other topics. All the courses are delivered online.
