



January 5, 2021

To Hospital Administrators and Residency Directors:

The Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS™) Course has a long tradition of facilitating education of Resident and Attending Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) in the care of the injured patient.

The current experience with COVID-19 leads us to assume that there will continue to be a significant backlog of providers who need/want to take ATLS. Recognizing this extraordinary situation, we are encouraging flexibility regarding ATLS training requirements. For existing ATLS Providers, we have offered a series of extensions on their status to allow for more time to locate a course. For any Physician or APP who needs to take ATLS for the first time, we suggest the following staged approach to completing ATLS training for employment or Trauma service rotation. This is an approach we are currently using for providers who require ATLS for the American Board of Surgery exams.

- The Physician or APP should attempt to locate an upcoming Hybrid Student Course. In these types of courses, much of the didactic work is completed online followed by a 1 to 1.5-day live skills course. ([ATLS Course Search Tool](#)). The student will gain immediate access to the online content and may begin work on the course.
- If this is not possible, the Physician or APP should work with ATLS Staff (atls@facs.org) to gain access to the online content until such time that they can locate a live course.
- Live skills course must be completed within 8 months of completion of the online course. ATLS Verification will not be confirmed until student has completed both the online component and the live skills course.

This staged approach is intended to be temporary. Once we assess that course availability has returned to the degree necessary to support ongoing ATLS training, we will suspend this approach. Furthermore, we recommend to residency programs that scheduling priority be given to intermediate- and senior-level residents as ATLS Courses resume. This will ease some of the stress as these residents are applying for jobs or applying to sit for their Boards. We encourage Hospital Administrators and Residency Directors to contact us with any questions regarding these recommendations.

We appreciate your working with us during this highly unusual situation. Please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Kim Joseph, MD, FACS
atls@facs.org