

P I 18-05 Developmental Disabilities Training Policy

Original: Nov. 1, 2018

Updated: Sept. 1, 2026

Purpose

This policy outlines the Developmental Disabilities (DD) provider's responsibility to provide quality training for staff within their agency. It also requires that all licensed providers of DD services meet the requirements for staff training, in accordance with state and federal regulations:

[NDCC 25-16-03. Requirements for license.](#)

The department shall issue a license for the operation of a treatment or care center for individuals with a developmental disability upon a showing that:

The people in charge of the provider agency, including their assistants, are qualified by training and experience to carry on efficiently the duties required of them.

[NDCC 50-06-06.3. Facility staff training.](#)

It is the intent of the legislative assembly that the department maintain a facility staff training system to assure adequate and appropriate staff development and training for the providers of community-based care on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities.

[NDAC 75-04-01-20\(1\)\(p\) Applicant guarantees and assurances:](#)

1. Applicants shall submit, in a manner prescribed by the department, evidence that policies and procedures approved by the governing body are written and implemented in a manner which:
 - p. Assures all staff demonstrate basic professional competencies as required by their job descriptions and comply with all required training, credentialing, and professional development activities.

Definitions:

- **Agency trainer:** an employee with sufficient knowledge and education who oversees orientation, position-based training and annual training for all agency staff.
- **Annually** is defined as 365 days from the last training completion date.
- **Behavioral support professional:** staff who do not meet the requirements to be a BCBA, psychiatrist or psychologist in North Dakota and may write positive behavior support plans.
- **Course instructor:** an employee with sufficient knowledge or certification to teach training courses (i.e., CPR/first aid instructors, nurses teaching the med practicum, therapeutic response instructors who are certified to teach)
- **Curriculum:** a planned sequence of training modules.
- **Employee:** Anyone employed by a DD licensee who has direct contact with eligible individuals or unsupervised access to their property, information, or resources. This includes, but is not limited to, Direct Support Professional (DSP) who provide hands-on care and support, supervisors, billing and clerical staff, senior staff, CEO, Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professionals (QIDP), and others who meet the definition of employee.
- **LMS:** Learning Management System
- **Learning pathway:** a learning track that contains more than one lesson for a specific position in a company.
- **Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional (QIDP):** The QIDP is the author of the person-centered service plan. Staff hired as the QIDP must comply with the educational requirements per Policy Issuance 09-09.
- **Sole responsibility** is defined as being the only staff member providing direct treatment or habilitation, without sharing that responsibility with another staff member.

Trainer Responsibilities

Each agency is responsible for ensuring that staff are trained. Each agency must identify staff who will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring staff training. Minimum responsibilities:

- Ensure that all staff have appropriate access to the LMS. Provide technical assistance to staff to access the system.
- Oversee orientation training, position-based competencies and course requirements for all agency staff.
- Assist the agency administrators with onboarding and offboarding of staff in LMS.
- Coordinate the orientation activities of newly hired employees with other internal agency staff members (residential manager, nurse, job coach, QIDP and PC).
- In addition to LMS, the agency trainer will provide training to the agency's direct support staff and other professionals to ensure the training curriculum is carried over to on-site skills.
- The agency trainer must have sufficient knowledge of the content in LMS and understand the curriculum.
- Agency trainers must take the courses to become familiar with the content in the LMS.
- Assess the need for additional staff training within the agency and address additional staff training needs.
- Maintain necessary records and document individual staff members' participation in the training curriculum.
- Request technical assistance in navigating and implementing the LMS as needed.
- Assist the agency in ensuring its training program meets licensure regulations.

- Oversee administration of competency tests, ensure the integrity and security of blank and completed tests, answer sheets and answer keys.

Training Requirements

Training is mandatory for the following:

- New employees, including full-time and part-time staff.
- Returning employees (after a break of more than one year)
- Contracted employees or interns who have direct contact with people.
- Veteran staff

The Learning Management System (LMS) will house required training needed for all employees who are required to complete it, initially, annually, and as needed. This training platform will be used by all DD providers. Employees who are hired will be trained in the same orientation curriculum as other agencies. The LMS will have additional training classes available for the state, the agencies or staff to complete. New hires and those who are required to complete the orientation will have 30 days from the date of hire. The initial orientation takes about 18 to 20 hours to complete.

If an employee has a break in service of less than one year and has previously completed the orientation in the LMS, they are not required to complete it again. However, the provider may choose to assign the orientation curriculum to the employee. The provider must ensure the employee has maintained the skills and qualifications to complete the tasks of the job.

If the break is longer than one year, the employee must complete the full orientation in the LMS again. The employee has 30 days to complete the orientation.

Training Documentation

Documentation of any training is the responsibility of each agency. DD-licensed providers should document and track training that includes the following elements:

- Employee's full name

- Summary or outline of training topics covered (if CEUs are requested, the number of contact hours awarded, and credentials of the instructor must be included)
- Date of training
- Instructor name
- Certificates, if provided.

Current training must be maintained in the LMS. For training documents completed prior to the LMS, training documents must be maintained by the agency for a period of seven years. Training records must be available to outside entities, including but not limited to health facilities, DD surveyor, and other licensing or certification bodies.

If your agency accepts training completed at another agency through the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the agency must obtain a copy of the training, which includes the date, name of the training, the trainer's name and course. If the training is already housed in the LMS, the agency must ensure it meets internal agency requirements.

Orientation Training

The orientation training must be completed in its entirety. The orientation will take between 18 to 20 hours to complete. It consists of the following modules and lessons:

Module 1: Person-Centered Approaches (three classes) 80 to 95 minutes

- Communication
- Objective documentation
- Person-centered communication

Module 2: Community Inclusion (two classes) 45 to 55 minutes

- Community Inclusion
- Settings and Services across North Dakota, which includes the HCBS settings requirement. A certificate must be printed upon completion of this portion of the training.

Module 3: Activities of Daily Living, Skills and Supports (four classes) 4 to 4.75 hours

- Dressing and Grooming
- Meal planning
- Personal Hygiene
- Safety and Mobility

Module 4: Proactive Strategies and Approaches (two classes) 80-90 minutes

- Crisis Prevention and Intervention
- Trauma-Informed Care

Module 5: Person-Centered Practices (two classes) 100 to 110 minutes

- Person-Centered Practices
- Advance Directives, Guardianship and Dignity of Risk

Module 6: Health and Safety (two classes) 100 to 110 minutes

- Preventing Infections
- Fire Safety

Module 7: Health and Wellness (two classes) 80 to 90 minutes

- Measuring and Monitoring Vital Signs
- Wellness and Aging

Module 8: Evaluation and Observation (one class) 20 to 25 minutes

- Evaluation and Observation

Module 9: Cultural Humility, Intimacy and Respect (three classes) 125 to 140 minutes

- Cultural Humility and Respect
- Sexuality, Intimacy and Consent

- Integrity and Respect

Module 10: Education, Training and Self Development (one class) 30 to 35 minutes

- Healthy Caregiving Starts with You

Module 11: Professionalism, Responsibility and Ethics (one class) 30 to 35 minutes

- Professionalism, Responsibility and Ethics

Module 12: Preventing Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (one class) 70 to 75 minutes

- Preventing Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Position-Based Competencies

The orientation and following training areas must be completed prior to the employee assuming sole responsibility for the person:

Orientation (as listed above)

Person-Centered Service Plans

- Training on the person's plan must occur prior to working alone. This training will be done independently of the LMS orientation curriculum and a record of the training must be documented (signed) and maintained by the agency.
- Training must focus on other support plans, health plans or nursing plans.
- Behavior support plans, if applicable.
- Documentation of this training must be maintained by the provider.

CPR and First Aid

- Must be taught using a curriculum that meets the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR) and American Heart Association (A.H.A.) standards. Renewals must be completed according to these standards.
- Instructors must be certified as an instructor in the curriculum they are teaching.

- Portions of the CPR/first aid class may be completed online. In order to be certified, employees must also complete a hands-on demonstration of skills with a certified instructor.

Medication Certification

- Employees must complete the medication module and pass the test and practicum to become medication certified. Employees must be certified by the agency nurse if they are administering any medications such as prescription medications, PRN medications, including but not limited to over-the-counter medications like ibuprofen, acetaminophen, cough medicine etc.
- A licensed agency nurse must observe at least one of the three medication passes. The nurse must sign off on the med practicum for the learner to obtain certification. If the nurse is not confident in staff's ability to pass medications, additional training and observations may be provided. The nurse should never sign off on an employee who does not meet the competency requirements for passing medications.
- Employees will follow the medication policy created by their agency. This policy must follow the requirements within the medication curriculum.

Non-Medication-Certified Staff

- Employees who are not required to be medication certified must complete the medication module and test, whether part-time or full-time.
- If a Direct Support Professional (DSP) will not be passing medications, including PRN, the practicum does not need to be completed.
 - If an employee moves into a position where they will be administering medications, including PRN, the observations and practicum must be completed and signed by the licensed medical practitioner before the employee is able to administer any medications.

Therapeutic Response (TR) or Similar Behavior Support Curriculum

- Employees must complete Therapeutic Response or a similar positive behavioral support curriculum within the first 90 days of employment, unless the provider

determines it is needed sooner. In the case of a behavioral program setting, the employee must be trained prior to working alone and cannot be involved with any restrictive interventions until training has been completed.

Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional (QIDP)

The QIDP is the author of the person-centered service plan. The staff hired as the QIDP must comply with the educational requirements per Policy Issuance 09-09.

Upon hire, QIDPs must complete:

- Initial orientation
- Position-based competencies
- QIDP training pathway

Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional (QIDP) pathway: the following lessons must be completed within 90 days of the staff member assuming the duties of a QIDP if they have a bachelor's degree in a professional category or human services field as listed in Policy Issuance 09-09.

- Writing Behavioral Objectives and Measuring Behavior
- Assessments and goal setting, including functional assessments
- Positive behavior supports
- Designing and implementing positive behavioral supports
- Guidelines for qualified intellectual disability professionals

If a staff member does not possess the listed bachelor's degree in a professional category or human services field but has a bachelor's degree in any other profession or field, they cannot assume the duties of a QIDP until all lessons in the QIDP pathway are completed.

If a staff member meets the qualifications of the QIDP and is promoted into this role, training must be completed within 90 days after accepting and starting as a QIDP. This may include but is not limited to the QIDP pathway.

Behavioral Support Plan Development

For staff who do not meet the requirements of a BCBA, psychiatrist or psychologist in North Dakota, and will be writing behavior support plans, the following courses must be completed within 90 days of assuming this position, along with other orientation elements:

- Writing Behavioral Objectives and Measuring Behavior
- Assessments and goal setting, including functional assessments
- Positive behavior supports
- Designing and implementing positive behavioral supports

Annual Training Requirements

After the initial orientation has been completed, the following classes must be trained annually, and as needed:

1. Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
2. Prohibited Procedures
3. Human and Legal Rights
4. Emergency Preparedness
5. HCBS Settings Rule
6. HIPAA and Confidentiality
7. Medication Recertification
 - a. Staff must be recertified at least annually, and as needed, to ensure they maintain competencies to continue to administer medications. This should be completed in each setting where they work.
 - b. Recertification must include the following:
 - i. A minimum of one medication pass observed by a licensed medical practitioner.

- ii. Supplemental training for recertification could consist of staff completing the medication module test again or using alternative teaching methods (e.g., tests or classes). Documentation must be provided verifying that a licensed medical practitioner has approved the alternative teaching methods and all revisions.
 - iii. A licensed medical practitioner must observe at least one medication pass and sign the recertification form if the staff member obtains the skill to pass medications. If the nurse is not confident in staff abilities, they are not required to sign the recertification form, and staff cannot pass any medications, including over the counter meds.
8. Person-Centered Service Plans
9. Positive Behavior Supports Curriculum refresher

Exceptions to Training Requirements

Staff who work exclusively in self-directed family support services or in a Family Care Option (FCO) setting are not required to complete the training curriculum. Families provide valuable insight into the needs and preferences of the person receiving services. Training will be provided by the family. This individualized approach supports recruiting staff who are interested in supporting one specific person.

Indirect Employee Training Requirements

For employees who do not work directly with individuals supported by the agency but may encounter them throughout the day (e.g., office personnel, rep payee, maintenance), it is the provider's responsibility to determine what training is appropriate.

Transition Plan

- If staff have not completed orientation training per P I 18-05 dated Nov. 18, 2025, they are required to complete orientation in the new LMS within 30 days from the date of this policy issuance.
- Staff who have completed orientation training but have not completed all the core modules based on the previously issued P I 18-05 dated Nov. 18, 2025, are required to complete the orientation curriculum in LMS by Nov. 30, 2026. These staff will not need to complete unfinished core modules since the orientation training encompasses that information.
- Anyone hired on or after Sept. 1, 2026, will be required to complete orientation in the LMS. This includes any other training requirements per this policy.
- For annual training courses that are not currently available in the LMS, the agency must continue to complete these training requirements. Documentation of this training must be maintained by the agency. When the courses are available in LMS, the agency will direct the employees to the updated annual training in LMS.
- For QIDP staff who were hired prior to Sept. 1, 2026, and have not completed the required QIDP modules, must complete the remaining QIDP modules through the North Dakota Centers for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) by Nov. 30, 2026. The certified trainers must continue to grade these tests. If the agency does not have a certified trainer, the tests will be sent to NDCPD to be graded. Any test scores must be maintained with the provider.
- Staff who may be finishing elective modules (non-QIDP) through NDCPD will have until Dec. 15, 2026, to have the modules graded by a certified staff trainer. If there is no trainer, these will be sent to NDCPD to be corrected. The results of the modules and tests need to be maintained at the agency.