

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
Developmental Disabilities Section**

**POLICY ISSUANCE PI 18-05 (revised)**

TO: DD Licensed Service Providers  
DD Program Administrators  
ND Protection & Advocacy Project (P&A)

FROM: Tina Bay, Director; Developmental Disabilities Section

DATE: November 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Staff Training – DD Licensed Providers

The following policy outlines the DD provider and DD State Office responsibility in meeting the commitment to providing quality training of staff within the DD provider industry.

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SECTION**

The Developmental Disabilities Section maintains a statewide training program. This provides training opportunities via workshops, seminars and online testing. Orientation and ongoing training of staff is overseen by the Licensed DD agency.

Throughout the document:

- “Annually” is defined as 365 days.
- “Sole responsibility” is defined as being the only staff (not sharing responsibility of) providing direct treatment or habilitation.

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROVIDERS**

This policy issuance requires that all licensed providers of Developmental Disabilities 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:

2. The persons 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 complies with all required trainings, credentialing, and professional development activities;

Decision-making responsibility for the conduct of staff training within individual agencies is generally left up to the agency.

**COMPLIANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR CURRENT AND NEW EMPLOYEES**

Training records must be maintained by the provider and made available upon request by any licensing, accrediting or certification entities.

**In-direct employee training requirements:**

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

**TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

Training is mandatory for all new employees, full and part-time staff, returning employees, contracted employees or interns that will have direct contact with individuals.

If the returning employee has had less than a one-year lapse in employment, it is acceptable for the provider to conduct a modified version of the orientation training. The provider must ensure that the employee has maintained the minimum qualifications necessary to complete the duties and tasks of their job.

## Orientation

The composition of the orientation training shall include at a minimum, but not be limited to, the following items:

- a) Overview of services in North Dakota, people first language, active support/active treatment principles and state and federal requirements;
- b) Human and legal rights to include HCBS Settings Rule\*;
- c) General overview of person-centered plan development, team concepts and DDPM responsibilities;
- d) Basic health and safety concerns;
- e) Current abuse and neglect policies and reporting requirements to include prohibited procedures in the State of ND\*;
- f) Emergency evacuations\*;
- g) PHI/HIPAA/Confidentiality\*;
- h) Therapeutic responses or a similar positive behavioral supports curriculum must be trained on within the first **90 days** of employment unless the provider determines it is needed sooner. In the case of a behavioral program setting, staff must be trained prior to working alone; \*

Items **a – g** must occur within **45 days** of their employment and **prior** to the employee assuming sole responsibility for the individual(s) receiving services. This does not apply to item **h** as the requirement for completion is listed above.

## Position-based Competency

Must be completed **prior** to the employee assuming sole responsibility for the individual(s) receiving services.

The following **MUST** be included in the position-based competency:

- OSP/IFSP/PCSP and any related behavioral support plans specific to the consumers they work with\*.
- Client specific information (which may include such focused training topics and practicum experiences, basic health and safety concerns or seizure activities) \*
- CPR and First Aid
  - Must be taught using a curriculum that meets the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR) and American Heart Association (AHA) standards.
  - Instructors must be certified as an instructor in the curriculum they are teaching.
  - Portions of the class may be completed online. However, in order to be certified, staff must complete a hands-on demonstration of skills with a certified instructor.

- Medication Certification
  - For any staff that will be passing medications including PRNs, prescription medications and any over the counter medications (i.e., ibuprofen, Tylenol, cough medicine etc.), they must have completed and passed the medication module, test and practicum to be medication certified. A licensed medical practitioner must observe a medication pass and sign off on the med practicum to obtain certification.
  - **Staff will follow the medication policy created by their agency. This policy will follow the teachings within the medication curriculum.**
- Medication Recertification
  - Staff must be recertified at least annually, and as needed throughout the year, to ensure they are maintaining the competencies to continue to administer medications in each environment in which they work.
  - Recertification must include at least one medication pass observation by a licensed medical practitioner and supplemental training.
    - The medication pass observation does not need to be completed one on one with an individual receiving services, rather it may be completed through a simulation process, as long as the nurse can verify that the staff can perform the pass safely and per policy.
    - Supplemental training **for recertification** could consist of staff completing the medication module test again or alternative teaching methods (i.e., tests, classes). Documentation must be provided verifying that a licensed medical practitioner has approved the alternative teaching methods and all revisions.
  - A licensed medical practitioner must also sign a medication recertification form.
- Non-Medication certified staff
  - All staff who are not going to be medication certified must complete the medication module and test, whether PT or FT.
  - If a DSP will not be passing medications, including PRNs, the practicum does not need to be completed.
  - If a staff member moves into a position where they will pass medications, **including PRNs**, the observations and practicum must be completed and signed by the licensed medical practitioner.

**\*All staff working for a provider agency who pass medications must be medication certified, regardless of the service they are providing.**

**\* All staff must be trained at least annually, and as needed, on the specific items noted in the orientation and position-based competencies sections.**

**\* After the initial training has been completed, a 30-day grace period will be allowed for staff to complete the required annual training.**

If employees are unable to complete the orientation or position-based competencies training, the agency must document the reason(s) of incompleteness and must come up with a plan of correction to ensure that training will be completed.

### **Module Requirements**

**Part-time staff** - are required to complete at least **3 core modules** within **18 months** of their hire date, which must include the medication training module. The modules must be defined by the job description for the settings that they are working in. If the setting changes, it is up to the agency to have staff trained on any additional modules required at that location.

**Full-time staff** - are those individuals who are identified as full-time status within the agency's classification and have direct contact with people receiving services. These staff are required to complete **4 core modules** and **2 elective modules** within **18 months** of their hire date, which must include the medication training module. It is the agency's responsibility to prioritize specific competencies for individual staff to ensure that they gain the knowledge and skills to make them the most effective in their positions.

- If full-time staff are working in other areas of the agency but only have direct contact on a part-time basis with people receiving services that are Title XIX HCBS or Title XIX ICF funded, the agency must document the number of hours staff are in direct contact to verify which training and module requirements are needed (i.e. staff working 30 hours performing maintenance duties and 10 hours providing direct contact services would complete the part-time module requirements).

#### **Core modules include:**

1. Supporting Individuals with Disabilities in the Community
  2. Legal Issues
  3. Achieving Personal Outcomes
  4. Person Centered Planning
  5. Medication Training
  6. Job Coach Training
  7. Working with Families
- Electives may be selected from any other modules in the curriculum determined by the agency to be most appropriate. The Guidelines and Coursework Syllabus for the North Dakota Statewide Staff Training Program will serve as a reference for further description of the prescribed training program, including core and elective modules.
  - Because NDCPD modules are accredited by the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), The Developmental Disabilities Section will accept training from another education provider accredited by NADSP if the training addresses substantially the same subject matter as the NDCPD module. However, the staff member will still need to complete the orientation and position-based competencies

training as well as following North Dakota specific modules through Minot State's NDCPD program:

1. Medication training module, test and practicum (if identified that they will be passing medications)
2. Any other job specific requirements designated by the provider that staff need in any setting to assure the health and safety of the individuals' served.

**DD Module Certification** is obtained through our contracted entity, once **6 core** and **6 elective** modules are successfully completed.

- Part-time, full-time and professional staff are not required to obtain certification.
- Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professionals (QIDP), Internal Case Managers (ICM), nurses acting in the position of ICM/QIDP, and other appropriate professionals must obtain certification within **18 months** of their hire date or date they assumed the duties of these positions.

**Professional Staff (PT, OT, Speech, RN, LPN, etc.)** – must complete orientation, position-based competencies and the specific training requirements for staff to assure that they have the competencies to work with the people who are on their caseload as well as those settings that they would be providing on-call responses to. Providers must ensure that staff have the competencies that meet the guidelines, and as indicated in their particular job descriptions.

**Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professionals (QIDP), Internal Case Managers (ICM), nurses acting in the position of ICM/QIDP, and other appropriate professionals** – must complete orientation, position-based competencies, DDPM responsibilities and **DD module certification** requirements as prescribed in this policy as a part of their normal employment duties. This will ensure they have a level of understanding of the principles in order to develop programming and direct staff in a manner consistent with the approved training and they promote the importance of the prescribed training within the agency.

**Employees that assume the role as a QIDP or any other position that allows them to write behavioral objectives and monitor programs** – must complete the following modules within 6 months of being hired for the position:

- Writing Behavioral Objectives and Measuring Behavior
- Assessments and Goal Setting
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Designing and Implementing Positive Behavioral Supports
- Guidelines for Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professional

**Employees that are hired by the agency and assume the role specifically as a Behavioral Analyst (BA)** – must complete orientation training and the following courses within 6 months of being hired for that position:

- Writing Behavioral Objectives and Measuring Behavior
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Designing and Implementing Positive Behavioral Supports

If the BA provides direct treatment or habilitation to the individual(s) receiving services, they must complete position-based competencies as prescribed.

**Exceptions to the module requirements:**

- Family Support Services **Family Care Option** providers are not employees of the Family Support Services provider and are not required to meet the training requirements.
- Staff working in a self-directed support setting, not through an agency but the family is self-directing, are not required to complete the modules. The families may use the modules for resource materials, but the staff will not be paid for modules the family wants their staff to view. Family members are a rich source of individual specific information and should be encouraged to directly provide the training they and the team feel appropriate. This individual approach allows for the recruitment of individuals who are interested in providing supports for one specific individual.

**Recording of All Staff Training**

The recording of **all** training shall be the responsibility of each individual agency. DD licensed providers must have a system for tracking training requirements for their employees. The format of the verification of staff training must contain:

- Agency Name
- Employee identification (name and ID number)
- Check list of Level I orientation content and completion date(s), which must be signed and dated by the employee and provider rep/trainer once all training is completed.
- Module training completed during previous employment at another licensed, accredited DD agency, if applicable.
- Documentation that module training was completed and the date it was completed.
- Documentation of all training and annual refresher courses must include:
  - Name and signature of the presenter/trainer
  - Training topic
  - Date of the training
  - Synopsis/overview of the training
  - Staffs name
  - Certificates, if handed out

If your agency accepts training completed at another agency, you MUST obtain copies of the training which includes the date, name of the training, the trainer's name and the content of the course.

Documentation of training must be maintained by the licensed provider and be available upon request by outside entities for review including Health Facilities, P&A, DD Section and other licensing entities.

**Quick guide for trainers**

Part-time	Full-time	Professional staff	QIDP
Orientation	Orientation	Orientation	Orientation
Position-based	Position-based	Position-based	Position-based
Medication training	Medication training	Medication training (optional based on position)	Medication training
3 core modules	6 modules - 4 core modules - 2 electives	6 modules - 4 core modules - 2 electives	DD Module Certified