

VERMONT
**QUALIFIED DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITY PROFESSIONAL
(QDDP)**

PROTOCOL
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Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living
Developmental Disabilities Services Division

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**STATE OF VERMONT
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES DIVISION**

QUALIFIED DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY PROFESSIONAL

INTRODUCTION

To perform the roles and responsibilities of a Qualified Developmental Disability Professional (QDDP) in Vermont, either paid or unpaid, an individual must meet either the federal or state definition of a QDDP and the additional qualifications outlines below. QDDPs may either work for a designated or specialized agency, or may act independently, being hired or contracted by individuals with developmental disabilities and/or their family members.

FEDERAL DEFINITION

A QDDP is defined in federal rule as a person who has at least one year of experience working directly with people with mental retardation or other developmental disability **and** is one of the following:

- A licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy;
- A registered nurse;
- An individual that holds at least a bachelor's degree in a professional category who is licensed, certified, or registered (as applicable) to provide professional services by the State of Vermont; or
- Professional program staff who do not fall under the jurisdiction of the state for licensure, certification, or registration and have the following qualifications:
 - Occupational therapist eligible for certification as an occupational therapist of the American Occupational Therapy Association or other comparable body;
 - Occupational therapy assistant eligible for certification as a certified occupational therapy assistant by the American Occupational Therapy Association or other comparable body;
 - Physical therapist eligible for certification as a certified physical therapy assistant by the American Physical Therapy Association or other comparable body;
 - Physical therapist assistant eligible for certification as a certified physical therapy assistant by the American Physical Therapy Association or a graduate of a two year college-level program approved by the American Physical Therapy Association or other comparable body;
 - Psychologist who maintains at least a master's degree in psychology from an accredited school;
 - Social worker with a graduate degree from a school of social work accredited or approved by the Council on Social Work Education or other comparable body; OR with a bachelor of social work degree from a college or university accredited or approved by the Council on Social Work Education or other comparable body;

- Speech-language pathologist or audiologist who is eligible for a certification in speech-language pathology or audiology OR who meets the educational requirements for certification and is in the process of accumulating the supervised experience required for certification;
- Professional recreational staff with a bachelor’s degree in recreation or in a specialty such as art, dance, music, or physical education.
- Professional dietician who is eligible for registration by the American Dietetics Association; or
- Designed human services professional who has at least a bachelor’s degree in a human services field including, but not limited to: sociology, special education, rehabilitation counseling and psychology.

VERMONT QUALIFICATIONS

To be recognized in Vermont as a QDDP, an individual must:

- Meet the federal definition above, **OR**
- Have a high school diploma or GED and have a minimum of six years of experience of working directly with people with mental retardation or other developmental disabilities, at least two of which are paid work performing QDDP responsibilities under the supervision of a QDDP.

Additional Qualifications

All individuals performing QDDP responsibilities in Vermont, in addition to meeting the definitions noted above, must also have knowledge of the following:

- Developmental Disabilities Act of 1996 and the Regulations Implementing the DD Act of 1996
- Individual Support Agreement Guidelines; person-centered planning
- Quality Services Guidelines, including all accompanying guidelines (such as Health and Wellness Guidelines, Behavior Support Guidelines, A Guide for People who are Self- or Family-Managing Medicaid-Funding Developmental Services, Individual Support Agreement (ISA) Guidelines, etc.)
- Abuse Reporting Criteria and Process – Adult Protective Services (adults) and Child and Family Services (children)
- Pre-Service and In-Service Training (outlined in the Regulations Implementing the DD Act of 1996)
- Knowledge of the funding systems (e.g., System of Care Plan, funding priorities, Authorized Funding Limit (AFL), etc.)

EXCLUSIONS FOR A QDDP

A QDDP cannot be the individual, or the individual’s spouse, domestic partner, civil union partner, parent, adoptive parent, step-parent, legal guardian or paid home provider.

DEFINITION AND ROLES OF A QDDP

QDDP responsibilities include:

- Knowledge of Intermediary Service Organization (ISO) payroll and tax services; Employer responsibilities
- Knowledge of initial Needs Assessment and Periodic Review of Needs
- Knowledge of the Authorized Funding Limits
- Knowledge of the acceptable uses of Medicaid funds
- Knowledge of the DDS Background Check Policy
- Knowledge of the Roles and Responsibilities of Individuals Managing Their Services and Agency Roles and Responsibilities
- Knowledge of situations that may create a conflict of interest
- Knowledge of the resources for information

QDDP in the Vermont System

The State of Vermont has an agreement with the federal government concerning Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services, as well as other state guidelines. Based on this agreement, a QDDP has specific roles in the Vermont service system for people with developmental disabilities.

Required Task	Comments
Medicaid Waiver initial eligibility assessment	Must be completed by a QDDP employed by a designated agency.
Medicaid waiver annual eligibility assessment	Must be completed by a QDDP employed by a designated agency or specialized service agency
Approve and monitor Individual Support Agreement (ISA)	QDDP is responsible for assuring that the ISA is developed in accordance with the ISA Guidelines. QDDP is responsible for ensuring that the ISA is being carried out, and is meeting the intended needs of the individual.
Review and change of ISA	QDDP is responsible for approval of any changes and formal review of the ISA according to the ISA Guidelines.
Quality assurance	QDDP is responsible for assuring that the services/supports are meeting the person’s needs in accordance with Division regulations and guidelines.

QDDP ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

A Qualified Developmental Disability Professional (QDDP) is required, by State and Federal rules, to approve and monitor the Individual Support Agreement and address quality assurance issues of people who receive developmental disabilities services funding. In Vermont, a QDDP may work for a designated or specialized service agency or may work as an independent QDDP hired directly by individuals who are self-managing or family managing their services or by a provider agency that is not a designated agency or a specialized service agency.

Designated Agencies (DA) and Specialized Service Agencies (SSA) are responsible for ensuring their staff meet the appropriate QDDP definition and additional qualifications. As such, these agencies are responsible for relevant training and supervision.

The Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) is responsible for endorsing individuals who are not employed by a DA or SSA and have fulfilled the responsibilities and qualifications of a QDDP. These individuals may be self-employed, working for an individual with developmental disabilities or family member, or may be an employee or contractor of a provider that is not a DA or SSA.

Endorsement Process for Individuals employed by a DA or SSA

Each DA and SSA is responsible for overseeing the QDDP endorsement process for their facility. Individuals should contact their DA or SSA to obtain information and requirements for endorsement. *Note: QDDP endorsement by a DA or SSA may only be valid at the facility in which the endorsement was made.*

Endorsement Process for Individuals not employed by a DA or SSA

DDSD ensures that individuals acting as independent QDDPs and those working for agencies other than designated or specialized service agencies have the required qualifications; will understand the roles and responsibilities of a QDDP; will have a base knowledge about the Vermont developmental disabilities service system; and will understand the state and federal rules and regulations governing services and supports to Vermonters with developmental disabilities.

Verification of the requirements is complete through the submission of an application packet and through an assessment process.

Application Process for Endorsement

Individuals acting as independent QDDPs and those working for agencies other than designated or specialized service agencies will submit an application packet to DDSD. The application packet must include:

- A detailed resume. The resume must be specific and provide dates of relevant experience and education.
- Contact information for work experiences (e.g. phone number, names, e-mail addresses)
- A cover letter providing any additional information the applicant would like considered.

The application packet should be sent to: Quality Management Team Leader, 280 State Drive, Waterbury VT 05671-2030

The application packet is reviewed to ensure the educational and experiential qualifications are met. After reviewing and verifying the education and experiential qualifications, a Quality Management Reviewer (QMR) from DDS will contact the individual to schedule, and will notify the individual in writing, the time for the assessment of knowledge about the role of a QDDP and the Vermont service system for individuals with developmental disabilities. (As noted in the Vermont Qualifications and Definition of Roles of a QDDP above.) The individual will be provided with a series of questions to be answered using the appropriate resources that are provided to the individual (e.g., ISA Guidelines, DD Act Regulations, etc.) The assessment will also include a case study that asks what the individual's response might be as the QDDP.

Upon successful completion of the qualifications and assessment of knowledge process, DDS will issue an endorsement to the individual stating they may act as an Independent QDDP within the State of Vermont.

QDDP Endorsement by DDS

A QDDP endorsement by DDS is valid indefinitely; however, if there is evidence that a person does not understand or pursue his/her role as an Independent QDDP in an appropriate manner, DDS may revoke the person's endorsement.

If an individual does not successfully complete the review process or has his/her endorsement revoked, he/she will receive a letter stating what areas need further review and what training or other action is needed, if applicable. An individual may reschedule an assessment of his/her knowledge after completing any required action.

DDS will provide independent QDDPs with information on new regulations, policy changes, training opportunities, and other relevant information.

QDDP REGISTRY

A QDDP endorsement by a DA or SSA is maintained at the facility in which the endorsement was made.

A QDDP endorsement by DDS is maintained in a registry of independent QDDPs which can provide individuals with disabilities and families information about the availability of independent QDDPs. To obtain information about independent QDDPs, contact: Transition II, 346 Shelburne Road, Burlington VT 05401, 886-572-7127.