

Vermont Division of Disability and Aging Services

QUALIFIED DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY PROFESSIONALS

Definition, Qualifications and Roles

Introduction

To perform the roles and responsibilities of a Qualified Developmental Disabilities 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 outlined below. Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professionals may either work for designated or specialized service agencies or act independently being hired or contracted by individuals with developmental disabilities and/or their family members.

Determination of QDDP Status

Designated agencies and specialized service agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff meet the appropriate QDDP definition and additional qualifications. As such, these agencies are responsible for relevant training and supervision.

The Division of Disability and Aging Services must endorse individuals fulfilling the responsibilities of a QDDP who are not employed by a designated agency or specialized service agency (see independent QDDP endorsement process). 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.

Federal Definition

A Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professional is defined in federal rule as a person who has a 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, must meet 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,
- Designated 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 Definition

In order to be recognized in Vermont as a Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professional, an individual must meet the federal definition above, OR:

- Have a high school diploma or GED and:
 - 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, Critical Incident Reporting Guidelines, Behavior Support Guidelines, etc.)
- Abuse Reporting – Adult Protective Services (adults) Child and Family Services (children)
- Pre-Service and In-Service Training (outlined in the Regulations Implementing the DD Act of 1996)
- Knowledge of Funding Systems (e.g., System of Care Plan, simple budgeting, etc.)

- ISOs (Payroll and Tax Services); Employer Responsibilities
- Initial Needs Assessment and Periodic Review of Needs
- Service Definitions and Goods and Services Authorized Funding Limits
- Acceptable uses of Medicaid funds
- DDS Background Check Policy
- Roles and Responsibilities of Individuals Managing Their Services and Agency Roles and Responsibilities
- Situations that may create a conflict of interest
- Resources to get needed information

Required Roles of a QDDP

According to the agreement the State of Vermont has with the federal government concerning Medicaid home and community-based waiver services, as well as other state guidelines, a Qualified Developmental Disability Professional has some specific roles in the Vermont service system for people with developmental disabilities. These specific roles are outlined below:

Required Task	Comments
Medicaid waiver initial eligibility assessment	Must be done by a QDDP employed by a designated agency.
Medicaid waiver annual eligibility assessment	Must be done by a QDDP employed by a designated agency or specialized service agency.
Approve and monitor ISA	QDDP is responsible for assuring that the ISA is developed in accordance with the <i>ISA Guidelines</i> . 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 <i>ISA Guidelines</i> .
Quality assurance	QDDP is responsible for assuring that the services/supports are meeting the person’s needs in accordance with Division regulations and guidelines.

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.