

Developmental Disabilities DSP and Supervisor Competencies Checklist

(for DD Waiver providers of Agency-Directed Personal Assistance, Agency-Directed Companion, Agency-Directed Respite, Center-based Crisis Services, Community-based Crisis Services, Crisis Support Services, Community Engagement, Community Coaching, Group Day Services, Group Home Residential, Group Supported Employment, Independent Living Supports, Individual Supported Employment, In-Home Support Services, Sponsored Residential, Supported Living Residential, and Workplace Assistance)

The Direct Support Professional (DSP) Competencies Checklist is designed to ensure a more consistent level of expertise among DSPs and Supervisors who provide supports in Virginia's developmental disabilities (DD) services system. "DSP" refers to staff members identified by the provider as having the primary role of assisting an individual on a day-to-day basis with routine personal care needs, social support, and physical assistance in a wide range of daily living activities so that the person can lead a self-directed life in his own community. The Competencies Checklist was developed by professionals with knowledge in best practices and in accordance with established orientation requirements for Virginia's DD waivers per [12VAC30-122-180](#). The three competency areas are: 1. Demonstrates person-centered skills, values, and attitudes; 2. Understands and follows service requirements; and 3. Demonstrates abilities that improve or maintain the health and wellness of those whom they support.

To ensure the health and wellness of people receiving services, Competency 3 and all related skills must be confirmed as *competent* **prior** to providing support in the absence of paid staff who have demonstrated proficiency with this competency. Competent refers to the minimum required for acceptability where proficiency establishes an ongoing level of ability.

This checklist serves as a tool to document that proficiency was confirmed in the required competency areas. The focus is on basic DSP and supervisor ability to meet the requirements of the DD waivers and to support individuals to have a life that includes what is important to each person based on his or her own desires and what is important for each person in terms of health, safety, and value in the community. The initial and ongoing completion of this checklist is the responsibility of direct supervisors who oversee the work of DSPs providing support under any of Virginia's DD waivers. A supervisor's ability to meet the three required competencies is determined by the provider's director (or designee), as well as through site visits conducted during DMAS, and as applicable DBHDS, program reviews. The elements of this checklist can be incorporated into established agency practices providing they are incorporated fully to include the type of training received, the three competencies and all related skills, as well as any observations that support the determination and confirmation of proficiency.

The columns in the checklist serve as a location to document the type of training received and the level of ability with each competency and related skills. The **Training Received** checkboxes are for recording the type of formal and informal training efforts related to the competency. Training can be obtained in a 1:1 setting, through group training, or through formal education such as a professional degree, online learning courses, or college courses that relate to the item. Evidence of training or education must be maintained for each individual and can cover one or more competencies as long as course content includes related information. The **Observation (indicators)** column serves as a guide to provide examples of what is observed to establish that the skill is present. An indication of one or more observations in this column substantiates the level of proficiency observed. This list is not meant to be all inclusive and may be supplemented by dates and comments provided in the last column. The **Implemented Skills (tracking)** column provides space to indicate staff ability based on direct observations during the 180 day period while identifying strengths and needs. DSPs or supervisors may demonstrate one of four levels of ability, which progresses from a basic understanding to proficiency:

DSP Competencies Checklist TEMPLATE (7.12.21) DMAS #P241a

- **Basic understanding:** The individual is able to communicate a fundamental understanding of the skill or action
- **Developing:** The individual is in the process of establishing the ability or is showing some, but not all, aspects of the skill or action in practice
- **Competent:** The individual demonstrates all of the skills or actions in column two, but not on a routine basis as appropriate to the skill or action. Competency refers to the minimum required for acceptability
- **Proficiency Confirmation:** The individual demonstrates all aspects of the skill or action on a routine basis in practice as appropriate to the skill or action. Proficiency establishes an ongoing level of ability.

The last column, **Proficiency Confirmation**, is a location to confirm that proficiency is achieved. Staff must consistently demonstrate each related skill and action to verify that proficiency is present. All skills and actions must be confirmed as “proficient” to establish an understanding and demonstration of the competencies necessary to support individuals with developmental disabilities under the DD waivers. By the end of the 180-day evaluation period from the date of hire, individuals must consistently demonstrate all skills and actions under each competency, with checkmarks of confirmation in the last column. The competency is then considered to be met and can be dated and initialed by the approving supervisor, director, or director’s designee.

DSPs and supervisors are deemed competent once all related skills and behaviors have been confirmed and indicated on the checklist, including noting as not applicable (NA) if an action related to any skill does not apply in the current role. Proficiency is established when the skills are observed over time and each area must be confirmed as proficient within 180 days. Each competency must be dated and initialed by the supervisor for DSPs or the agency director (or designee) for supervisors.

This checklist must be reconfirmed (and updated as appropriate) at least annually to ensure that DSPs and their supervisors are proficient in the competencies as described. Competencies may be documented on this tool, or adapted into an alternative format as long as the competencies and areas of reporting remain consistent with this document. The initial completion of the checklist and annual updates must be maintained in the staff personnel file and available for review by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, and other reviewers as required.

If at any time a DSP or DSP Supervisor is found to be deficient in any competency area, the provider must document actions taken and the date that restoration of ability is confirmed pursuant to 12VAC30-122-180. Agencies with DSPs or DSP supervisors who have failed to pass the orientation test or demonstrate competencies as required will be referred to DMAS Program Integrity for consideration of additional actions.

DSP Competencies Checklist TEMPLATE (rev. 7.12.21) DMAS #P241a Name: _____

Competencies, Skills & Abilities	Observation (indicators)	DSP	Supervisor	Implemented Skills (tracking)	Proficiency Confirmation
Competency 1 Demonstrates person-centered skills, values and attitudes Training Received: <input type="checkbox"/> 1:1, <input type="checkbox"/> Group, <input type="checkbox"/> Formal education				Enter supervisor initials and date when proficiency determined or reconfirmed for all elements of Competency 1 →	
1.1 Facilitates interactions with others in natural settings with persons without disabilities (other than those paid to support the individual)	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates including individuals in conversations (e.g. with cashiers, neighbors, salespeople, hairdressers) <input type="checkbox"/> Assists in communication with parents and family (e.g., phone calls, visits, letters) <input type="checkbox"/> Assists in getting to know neighbors	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.2 Supports individuals to participate in naturally occurring community activities that reflect the individuals' preferences	<input type="checkbox"/> Names at least 3 possible community activities that address what is important to the people they support <input type="checkbox"/> Assists with developing community interests (e.g., strengthening friendships, going places liked, using local businesses)	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.3 Communicates understanding of what is important TO	<input type="checkbox"/> Articulates what's needed for people they support to be happy, content, and fulfilled	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.4 Communicates understanding of what is important FOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Articulates what's needed for health, safety and value in community for the individuals they support	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.5 Communicates effectively with individuals about support being provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Asks permission before touching <input type="checkbox"/> States steps about to occur when providing supports <input type="checkbox"/> Uses respectful language/ tone	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.6 Demonstrates person-first language	<input type="checkbox"/> Refers to people by name rather than disability <input type="checkbox"/> Speaks directly to the person supported <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates active listening	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.7 Recognizes behavior as a form of communicating	<input type="checkbox"/> Gives 3 examples of how actions convey messages (e.g. damaging property can mean a person feels pain or boredom)	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
1.8 Involves individuals in choice throughout their days	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides choice of clothing <input type="checkbox"/> Provides choice of foods <input type="checkbox"/> Provides choices about where to go	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed

DSP Competencies Checklist TEMPLATE (rev. 7.12.21) DMAS #P241a Name: _____

Competencies, Skills & Abilities	Observation (indicators)	DSP	Supervisor	Implemented Skills (tracking)	Proficiency Confirmation
	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides choices about who to go with <input type="checkbox"/> Provides choices about when to go <input type="checkbox"/> Provides choices about free time			Comments:	Comments:
1.9 Serves as a model for Direct Support Professionals by demonstrating respectful communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Models respectful communication by using a polite tone with clear instructions <input type="checkbox"/> Models including people supported in conversations <input type="checkbox"/> Models active listening		✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
Competency 2 Understands and follows service requirements Training Received: <input type="checkbox"/> 1:1, <input type="checkbox"/> Group, <input type="checkbox"/> Formal education				Enter supervisor initials and date when proficiency determined or reconfirmed for all elements of Competency 2 →	
2.1 Describes the service being provided	<input type="checkbox"/> Conveys the purpose of the service provided in accord with the service definition	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
2.2 Describes outcomes, support activities, and instructions on Plans for Supports for individuals supported	<input type="checkbox"/> Locates individual support plans and instructions; <input type="checkbox"/> Describes the plans for the person(s) they support	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
2.3 Maintains required documentation that is timely and factual	<input type="checkbox"/> Completes documentation correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Completes documentation within required timeframes; Writes a signed, dated note that meets Medicaid requirements by including <input type="checkbox"/> the support provided, <input type="checkbox"/> person's response to the support, and <input type="checkbox"/> any additional actions needed	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
2.4 Works cooperatively with individuals, families, co-workers, professionals and others	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently demonstrates punctuality for planned meetings; Demonstrates respectful communication with <input type="checkbox"/> individuals, <input type="checkbox"/> families, and <input type="checkbox"/> other professionals	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
2.5 Communicates the expectations and	<input type="checkbox"/> Describes DSP role effectively;		✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed

DSP Competencies Checklist TEMPLATE (rev. 7.12.21) DMAS #P241a Name: _____

Competencies, Skills & Abilities	Observation (indicators)	DSP	Supervisor	Implemented Skills (tracking)	Proficiency Confirmation
responsibilities to the DSPs they supervise	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides clear instructions to those they supervise			Comments:	Comments:
2.6 Provides DSPs with guidance or takes remedial action to the extent necessary to ensure: a) provision of services and b) necessary documentation	Responds professionally to concerns with performance by <input type="checkbox"/> following agency procedures around performance management <input type="checkbox"/> maintains documentation per policies <input type="checkbox"/> minimizes or eliminates related risks to those supported		✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
Competency 3 and all related skills must be confirmed as competent prior to providing support in the absence of paid staff who has demonstrated proficiency with this competency.					
Competency 3 Demonstrates abilities that improve or maintain the health and wellness of those they support Training Received: <input type="checkbox"/> 1:1, <input type="checkbox"/> Group, <input type="checkbox"/> Formal education NOTE: Two confirmations are required for this section. All DSP and DSP Supervisors must be confirmed as “ <i>competent</i> ” in all of the skills in Competency Area 3 prior to working in the absence of staff who have been determined proficient in this area. Competence is established when all observation indicators in column two have been observed. Proficiency must be confirmed within 180 days of hire or original contract date for contracted staff.				Enter supervisor initials and date when competence* is determined for all elements of Competency 3 ↓	Enter supervisor initials and date when proficiency determined for all elements of Competency 3 ↓
3.1 Conveys a basic understanding of the health information for the people they support	<input type="checkbox"/> Describes the identified health and behavioral support needs for each individual and their role in providing support to each person	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.2 Conveys an understanding of the steps needed to ensure medications are provided as prescribed to include providing medications or contacting qualified staff who can provide medications	<input type="checkbox"/> Successfully locates medication and side effect information according to agency standards; <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates ability to administer medication by the right dose, method and person; <input type="checkbox"/> Describes process for reporting unusual health events according to agency procedures	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.3 Correctly follows nutrition plans and meal preparation guidelines (including the use of thickeners, special textured food preparation such as pureed and chopped consistencies and uses the correct utensils) for all individuals supported	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates steps needed to prepare foods according to individual needs <input type="checkbox"/> Provides supports correctly according to individual plans	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:

DSP Competencies Checklist TEMPLATE (rev. 7.12.21) DMAS #P241a Name: _____

Competencies, Skills & Abilities	Observation (indicators)	DSP	Supervisor	Implemented Skills (tracking)	Proficiency Confirmation
3.4 Operates and maintains adaptive, orthopedic, and communicative equipment correctly	As appropriate, correctly uses <input type="checkbox"/> communication devices, <input type="checkbox"/> locking wheels on wheelchairs, <input type="checkbox"/> making walkers available, <input type="checkbox"/> using mechanical lifts correctly, <input type="checkbox"/> cleaning wheelchairs and checking them for safety, <input type="checkbox"/> applying splints/socks	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.5 Demonstrates providing proper oral hygiene for the individuals they support	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides support with oral care consistently and correctly based on individual needs <input type="checkbox"/> Describes the importance of and ways to maintain good oral health	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.6 Explains the process for observing and reporting changes in behavioral or health status to include: a. How to monitor and document changes b. When to call a supervisor c. When to call REACH/Emergency Services d. When to call 911 (medical or police)	<input type="checkbox"/> Describes role in monitoring and documentation up to and including the appropriate notification of the health or behavioral event <input type="checkbox"/> Describes role in notifying a supervisor when non-emergent changes in health and/or behavioral status occur <input type="checkbox"/> Provides two examples (one medical and one behavioral) of circumstances that require a 911 call <input type="checkbox"/> Describes role in contacting 911 immediately when serious health events occur <input type="checkbox"/> Describes role in contacting REACH/Emergency Services immediately when serious behavioral events occur <input type="checkbox"/> Explains process of scheduling, keeping, and following through on all health appointments	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.7 Demonstrates an understanding of the requirements of adhering to privacy requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Describes standards of confidentiality and ethical practice (i.e. adheres to policies for release of information, shares information on as needed basis, etc.)	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.8 Accurately records health data/information (e.g. seizures, falls bowel movements, intake/output, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Records data per agency requirements	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.9 Implements health and behavioral plans as written	<input type="checkbox"/> Assists with completing personal care (e.g., hygiene and grooming) activities.	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent*	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Assists individuals in implementing health and medical supports			Comments:	Comments:
3.10 Maintains a safe environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Assists person with household management (e.g., meal prep, laundry, cleaning, etc.)	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent*	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.11 Adheres to safety procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Follows evacuation procedures correctly	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent*	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.12 Describes role in recognizing and reporting abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation (A,N,E)	<input type="checkbox"/> States three possible signs of A,N, E (i.e. one for physical, sexual or verbal/psychological abuse; one for neglect ;and one for exploitation) <input type="checkbox"/> States three proactive things providers can do to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation of individuals by their employees <input type="checkbox"/> States steps needed to report suspected A, N, E to DBHDS and the Department of Social Services within 24 hours and as required by agency policies	✓	✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent*	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:
3.13 Provides guidance to Direct Support Professionals on identifying individual-specific changes that may indicate the need for an emergency response or team meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Explains DSP role effectively in identifying potential concerns and responding in agreement with agency standards		✓	<input type="checkbox"/> basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> developing <input type="checkbox"/> competent* Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> proficiency confirmed Comments:

If at any time a DSP or DSP Supervisor is found to be deficient in any competency area, the provider must document actions taken and the date that restoration of ability is confirmed pursuant to 12VAC30-122-180. Proficiency is confirmed as indicated by signatures and dates signed below.

Employee's Printed Name

Employee's Signature

Date

Supervisor's Printed Name

Title

Supervisor's Signature

Initials

Date

These competencies must be updated annually by the supervisor for DSPs, or the agency's director (or designee) for supervisors. Providing a signature and date of review below confirms that the DSP or supervisor continues to meet these competencies. The following updated form may be utilized for three consecutive years before a new checklist is needed for updates. **A new competency checklist form must be completed in the fifth year.**

Annual DSP and Supervisor Competencies Updates		
Second year	Third Year	Fourth year
<p>Complete the appropriate section below:</p> <p>I have observed that the employee continues to meet DBHDS-standards by demonstrating the skills and behaviors in each of the three required areas:</p> <p>1. <u>Person-centeredness,</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>2. <u>Following service requirements,</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>3. <u>Supporting health and wellness.</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>_____ Printed name Initials</p> <p>_____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Date</p> <p>If at any time a DSP or DSP Supervisor is found to be deficient in any competency area, the provider must document actions taken and the date that restoration of ability is confirmed pursuant to 12VAC30-122-180.</p> <p>Proficiency is confirmed (or reconfirmed) as indicated by signatures and dates signed below.</p> <p>_____ Printed name Initials</p> <p>_____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Date</p>	<p>Complete the appropriate section below:</p> <p>I have observed that the employee continues to meet DBHDS-standards by demonstrating the skills and behaviors in each of the three required areas:</p> <p>1. <u>Person-centeredness,</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>2. <u>Following service requirements,</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>3. <u>Supporting health and wellness.</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>_____ Printed name Initials</p> <p>_____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Date</p> <p>If at any time a DSP or DSP Supervisor is found to be deficient in any competency area, the provider must document actions taken and the date that restoration of ability is confirmed pursuant to 12VAC30-122-180.</p> <p>Proficiency is confirmed (or reconfirmed) as indicated by signatures and dates signed below.</p> <p>_____ Printed name Initials</p> <p>_____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Date</p>	<p>Complete the appropriate section below:</p> <p>I have observed that the employee continues to meet DBHDS-standards by demonstrating the skills and behaviors in each of the three required areas:</p> <p>1. <u>Person-centeredness,</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>2. <u>Following service requirements,</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>3. <u>Supporting health and wellness.</u> _____ Initials</p> <p>_____ Printed name Initials</p> <p>_____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Date</p> <p>If at any time a DSP or DSP Supervisor is found to be deficient in any competency area, the provider must document actions taken and the date that restoration of ability is confirmed pursuant to 12VAC30-122-180.</p> <p>Proficiency is confirmed (or reconfirmed) as indicated by signatures and dates signed below.</p> <p>_____ Printed name Initials</p> <p>_____ Signature</p> <p>_____ Date</p>