

# Vermont Division of Disability and Aging Services

## **ENDORSEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS ACTING INDEPENDENTLY AS QUALIFIED DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY PROFESSIONALS**

### **Introduction**

In Vermont's developmental services system, a Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professional (QDDP) may work for a provider 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 DA or SSA.

An endorsement from the Vermont Division of Disability and Aging Services (DDAS) is required for all QDDPs who are not employed by a designated or specialized service agency. Through this endorsement, DDAS will insure that individuals acting as independent QDDPs and those working for other provider agencies will have the qualifications required to be a QDDP; will have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a QDDP; will have a base of knowledge about the Vermont developmental service system; and will have an understanding of the state and federal rules and regulations governing services and supports to Vermonters with developmental disabilities.

The endorsement process will also enable the creation and maintenance of a registry of independent QDDPs. This will allow DDAS to contact independent QDDPs to provide information on new regulations, policy changes, training opportunities and other relevant information, as well as provide individuals with disabilities and families information about the availability of independent QDDPs.

### **Endorsement Process**

Individuals seeking endorsement from the Division of Disability and Aging Services will be required to meet the educational and experiential qualifications of the federal or Vermont definition of a QDDP. This will be verified through the submission of an application packet and a process to assess the individual's knowledge about the role of a QDDP and the Vermont service system for people with developmental disabilities.

#### **Application Packet:**

1. A detailed resume; the resume needs to be specific and provide dates of relevant experience and/or education.
2. Relevant contact information (e.g., phone number, names, e-mail addresses) for work experiences must also be included.
3. A cover letter providing any additional information that the applicant may consider relevant for consideration.

**Knowledge Assessment:** After DDAS staff have determined that educational and experiential qualifications are met, an individual will be provided with a series of questions that will be answered using the appropriate resources (e.g., ISA Guidelines, DD Act Regulations, etc.) as necessary. This assessment will also include a case study that asks what the individual's response might be as the QDDP. The purpose of this process is to assess the applicant's familiarity and knowledge of relevant information concerning the roles and responsibilities of a QDDP. An individual is expected to have familiarity

with the following information. The degree of familiarity may vary, and emphasis is placed on information directly affecting the quality of services and supports for people with developmental disabilities:

- Developmental Disabilities Act of 1996 and the Regulations Implementing the DD Act of 1996
- Individual Support 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) & Social and Rehabilitation 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
- DAIL 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

The Division of Disability and Aging Services will make applicable information available to individuals seeking QDDP endorsement by providing a packet of information for his/her review at the time of initial application.

### **QDDP Endorsement**

Upon successful completion of the qualification and assessment of knowledge process, the Division of Disability and Aging Services will issue an endorsement to the individual stating that they may act as an Independent QDDP within the State of Vermont.

An individual's endorsement 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 of knowledge 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.