

Sample Information that could be included in Job Description for Direct Support Professional for Individualized Day Supports

Position Overview:

This is a very individualized form of support provided to DC residents with intellectual disabilities. It is vital that there is a good match between a service recipient and his/her Direct Support Professional (DSP) so that a positive relationship can grow. The relationship formed should be mutually beneficial and enjoyable.

It is also critical that all DSPs providing Individualized Day Supports recognize a primary goal of the service is to facilitate community integration – to support positive and rewarding involvement in the community that leads to opportunities for relationships and interdependence with fellow community members, including opportunities to contribute, to grow personally, and to engage fully in what the local neighborhood, ward and the larger city has to offer.

The following values and beliefs are essential -

- Belief in the rights of people with intellectual disabilities to participate fully in community life, just like every other citizen.
- A person-centered approach to providing support.
- Seeing a person's gifts and possible ways they may make a contribution.

The following skills and qualities are essential -

- *A willingness and capacity to self manage.* Individualized Day Supports (IDS) DSPs work with a great deal of autonomy and must be well organized and able to manage a daily schedule. They must be able to make informed decisions about the best use of a person's time and support the person to make choices for themselves. They must be able to make decisions about a person's well-being and take action which is in the person's best interests.
- Demonstrate *respect and a dignified approach* to the person at all times.
- In carrying out these roles an IDS DSP must *make judgments that are in line with the organization's values and overall service mission and philosophy.* They therefore must share the organization's mission and beliefs. They should have the capacity and desire to learn from their experiences.
- *Motivation* is important. The IDS DSP must be prepared to work at building their relationship with a service recipient, have a mature and level-headed outlook and a realistic understanding of what making progress and achievements will look like.
- *Good communication skills and the ability to relate well to others* including community members is essential. The ability 'to read' people and situations is necessary.
- As the role involves supporting people in the community throughout the day, any worker must have the *physical stamina, fitness* and willingness to be 'out and about' and 'on the go' over a 6/7 hour day.

Other desirable criteria –

- *Experience* of providing personal care may be helpful. However, this is a skill that the person who possesses the other essential qualities we are looking for can learn so is not essential.
- Most IDS DSP's will not require a driver's license and clean driving record, as public transportation will be used. However, some service recipients may require someone with a driver's license, a clean driving record, and availability of a personal vehicle, and some service recipients may require drivers who will drive the service recipient's own vehicle. So having a driver's license, clean driving record, and personal vehicle that can be used during employment is a desirable but not essential requirement.