

**JOB DESCRIPTION: DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL  
(ADULT RESIDENTIAL SERVICES)**

**I. QUALIFICATIONS**

The Direct Support Professional (DSP) shall have a minimum of a High School Diploma/GED. The DSP shall have demonstrated ability to support people with disabilities; ability to work a flexible schedule; crisis prevention, intervention and teaching skills; and a valid Maine drivers license and own vehicle for most direct support positions.

The DSP shall have or acquire and shall maintain Certified Residential Medication Aide (CRMA) certification, First Aid/CPR certification, PACT certification, Mental Health Rehabilitation Technician I (MHRT I), Mental Health Support Specialist (MHSS) and/or Direct Support Professional (DSP) Certification, within the first 30 days preferably and ongoingly thereafter.

The DSP shall have essential physical skills – be able to run, squat, stoop/bend, kneel, climb stairs, be able to lift at least 50 pounds (or ¼ own body weight), push and pull against potential resistance; and be able to implement non-physical and physical interventions and CPR with people supported when needed. He/she shall have adequate vision, reading, writing and documentation skills and hearing to perform the essential functions of the job; demonstrated commitment to the mission and philosophy of OHI; conflict resolution skills; ability to assimilate information and apply it to situations; ability to maintain assigned work hours, having sufficient endurance to perform tasks over long periods of time; and computer skills.

**II. OVERVIEW OF DUTIES:**

The DSP shall be responsible to support adults with disabilities of all ages and others who need assistance to lead self-directed lives and contribute to their communities; and supports behaviors that enhance inclusion in their communities. The DSP shall understand that people requiring support who have one disability, such as mental illness, can also have another disability, such as a substance abuse disorder, cognitive disability or a medical condition. These conditions are called co-occurring disorders. The DSP shall promote OHI's welcoming and effective provision of supports to such people.

The DSP is responsible to assure that quality supports and services are provided to people residing in the homes to which he/she has been assigned, and that the philosophy of OHI is adhered to at all times. The DSP is responsible to assure that there is consistency in the supports provided to each person with disabilities; that the communication among team members is effective; that duplication of efforts is eliminated; bureaucracy is reduced; that the small agency feeling is maintained; that a holistic approach is provided to people supported; and best practices are used.

The DSP is responsible for teaching daily living, communication and work skills, administering medications and first aid, providing safe transportation, assisting with or coordinating medical and other support service appointments, maintaining accurate and detailed documentation and records, safeguarding the monetary and personal resources of people supported, and implementing the philosophy, policies and procedures of OHI.

**III. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The DSP shall be accountable to the Community Support Supervisor.

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The DSP shall:

##### **A. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF OHI**

1. Respect each person as an individual and the rights of each person.
2. Implement the dignity of risk principles.
3. Implement people first language consistently.
4. Actively advocate for each person's rights.
5. Encourage choice and community inclusion.
6. Promote the belief that "everything is possible".
7. Protect each person's right to privacy and confidentiality.

##### **B. KNOWLEDGE**

The DSP shall have specific knowledge of, implement and assure the implementation of the following:

1. OHI policies, procedures, position statements and guidelines as outlined.
2. OSHA, Licensing and accreditation rules.
3. Fire safety, life safety and other pertinent city/town codes.
4. OHI organizational structure, mission, vision and philosophy.
5. Dignity of risk principles and the principle of social role valorization.
6. Funding regulations, budgetary agreements and contracts, including licensing and other regulations.
7. Strategic Plan of OHI.
8. All applicable rights and grievances rules and regulations.
9. AMHI Consent Decree, Community Consent Decree and other Decrees affecting adults with disabilities.
10. Safety Plan.
11. Quality Improvement Plan.
12. Behavior and Restraint Regulations.
13. The Characteristics of an OHI Professional.
14. Possess working knowledge of all phases of the job and the various techniques and skills necessary for the efficient completion of tasks.
15. Confidentiality and privacy laws and regulations, including HIPPA.
16. Professional boundaries and ethical standards/behavior.
17. Remain up-to-date on changes and trends in the technical knowledge of the job.
18. Expand knowledge of job and OHI services as it relates to other positions.

##### **C. PERSON SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE**

The DSP shall have knowledge of each person he/she supports in the following areas:

1. Personal history.
2. Home and work representatives, goals and objectives.
3. Support service staff.
4. Goals identified by and for each person supported.
5. Medical history.
6. Family members.
7. Friends.

8. Read all incoming diagnostic and other materials concerning people supported, such as medical evaluations, psychological examinations, psychiatric evaluations, crisis plans and ISPs/PCPs.

#### **D. RIGHTS AND ADVOCACY DUTIES**

The DSP shall demonstrate an understanding of the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in leading self-directed lives (e.g. exercising human and civil rights, obtaining access and accommodations as desired, meeting financial obligations and obtaining entitlements and supports) and assist each person to overcome challenges through effective advocacy and the facilitation of self advocacy.

1. Assist and support each person to understand his/her rights and responsibilities.
2. Advocate for recommended and necessary supports or services for each person.
3. Report and assure rights and abuse violation allegations are processed according to the Abuse, Neglect, Mistreatment and Exploitation Policy and the Rights Policy.
4. Follow the chain of command to address rights and abuse issues, which are not being addressed in a timely or effective manner.
5. Provide training and mentoring to colleagues on rights and abuse.
6. Teach and support people with disabilities to report rights and abuse issues.
7. Promote empowerment and self-confidence of people supported to speak out for themselves and others.

#### **E. COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The DSP is responsible to use a range of communication skills and strategies to establish a collaborative relationship with each person supported, co-workers, and people who are important to the person supported. The DSP shall:

1. Demonstrate effective communication skills with others.
2. Communicate in a clear and concise manner.
3. Communicate directly and with tact, dignity and respect.
4. Listen to what others have to say.
5. Identify communication problems and take active steps to resolve them.
6. Effectively give and receive constructive feedback.
7. Promote and participate in positive working relationships with others.
8. Demonstrate intolerance of gossip.
9. Welcome guests and visitors in a cordial manner.
10. Document and notify individuals involved of telephone calls and communications.
11. Initiate and maintain good community contacts and relationships.
12. Communicate effectively with outside agencies, guardians, and community members.
13. Follow the internal chain of command to solve problems.
14. Constructively recommend change through established procedures.
15. Meet, communicate and cooperate with families, guardians, service providers, employees, people supported, caseworkers and others as needed.
16. Use a range of communication skills and strategies to establish a collaborative relationship with the person supported, co-workers and others.
17. Post or file all incoming written memos and communications. Share with co-workers.

#### **F. INTERACTION AND TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES WITH PEOPLE SUPPORTED**

The DSP is responsible to assist the person supported to manage every day aspects of life by teaching and providing supports in a manner that builds on individual strengths and capabilities

and maximizes choices. When interacting with or teaching a person with disabilities, the DSP shall:

1. Use an appropriate voice tone and level.
2. Use positive interactions.
3. Allow a reasonable response time for learning.
4. Provide clear instructions.
5. Be respectful.
6. Use a variety of approaches.
7. Encourage people to make choices.
8. Use non-threatening, non-physical, least restrictive approaches first.
9. Use a calm, firm, directive voice tone.
10. Take action to prevent escalation of behavior.
11. Model appropriate behavior.
12. Provide crisis prevention and intervention.
13. Respond quickly and effectively to crisis and stressful situations.
14. Maintain professional boundaries.

**G. IMPLEMENTATION OF PERSON CENTERED PLANNING OR INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PLAN PROCEDURES**

The DSP is responsible to use formal and informal methods to learn about the needs, desires and interests of the person. He/she is responsible to assist the person supported to identify and use the formal and informal supports available in his/her community, family and social network. He/she shall work with the person supported to develop and sustain relationships with family, friends and community members. The DSP shall:

1. Collaborate with the person and others to plan and implement individualized supports in an ethical, holistic and professional manner that builds upon individual strengths and capabilities and maximizes choices.
2. Mobilize resources and provide the support necessary for the person to engage in satisfying work, education or daily activity.
3. Assist each person to identify needs, desires, and goals for the future.
4. Assist each person to communicate needs, desires and goals to the rest of the Team.
5. Actively participate in planning Team meetings of each person, as directed.
6. Consistently implement each person's plans and protocols.
7. Take immediate action when inconsistencies in plan implementation are reported or observed.
8. Demonstrate the ability and willingness to support people with a wide variety of needs.
9. Demonstrate a "people first" philosophy.
10. Teach approaches and strategies to other colleagues.
11. Develop and maintain a warm and friendly environment that is conducive to the achievement of optimal development of each person supported.
12. Teach each person menu planning, grocery shopping, cooking skills and recycling skills.
13. Assure that a wide variety of foods are offered to ensure that a well balanced diet is available to each person and that each person has the opportunity to experience new foods.
14. Assure family style dining occurs where each person chooses his/her own food and portions according to his/her tastes and preferences.
15. Make the health, safety, protection of rights and the development of the people supported his/her primary responsibilities.

16. Provide supports to both men and women with disabilities.
17. Assure people supported are dressed appropriately when in the community.
18. Refrain from using the personal possessions of persons supported.
19. Teach persons supported to keep their home in a clean and orderly fashion. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the DSP to assure that the home is clean, neat and orderly and that all other normal functions (cooking, laundry) take place.
20. Inform the supervisor of the training needs of people supported.

**H. FACILITATION AND TEACHING OF COMMUNITY INTEGRATION, INDEPENDENCE AND NATURAL SUPPORTS**

The DSP is responsible to empower people with disabilities, their families and/or guardians where appropriate by providing the support and information necessary to make informed choices and decisions and helps build the self-esteem and assertiveness to lead a self-determining life. The DSP shall:

1. Assist people to develop natural supports within their communities.
2. Teach people skills to become self advocates.
3. Support each person to maintain an active role with family members, guardian, outside organizations, DHHS and others when appropriate.
4. Assist each person to be aware of and take part in social, recreational and civic opportunities of their choice within the community.
5. Encourage and support each person to speak for themselves rather than speaking for them or about them.
6. Empower each person (their families or guardians where appropriate) by providing the support and information necessary to make informed choices and decisions.
7. Assist each person to build the self-esteem and assertiveness necessary to lead a self-determining life.
8. Assist the person to identify and use the formal and informal supports available in his/her community, family and social network. Assist the person to develop and sustain relationships with friends, family and community members.
9. Facilitate inclusion and engagement in community and neighborhood life.
10. Promote appropriate social roles such as student, church member, friend, home owner and career professional.
11. Promote typical life patterns and conditions that enhance the quality of a person's life including income enhancement, a comfortable home, quality health care, relaxation and recreation, career and educational advancement and connection to social and family networks.

**I. COORDINATION OF SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

The DSP is responsible to collaborate with the person supported and others to plan and implement individualized supports in an ethical, holistic and professional manner that builds upon individual strengths, choices and capabilities. The DSP shall:

1. Assist each person to identify and address medical needs as they arise.
2. Facilitate and/or coordinate the medical service needs of persons supported in each home.
3. Support each person to coordinate the timely arrangement of all professional evaluations, supports, and services provided by outside service providers and consultants, as directed and appropriate.
4. Participate in the service initiation process, as directed.

**J. MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION AND MEDICAL DUTIES**

1. Administer the correct medication to the right person, at the right time, using the correct route and dosage.
2. Observe and work with persons supported to identify signs and symptoms of adverse medication reactions.
3. Teach people supported about their medications and the intended outcome of each.
4. Accurately document the administration of medications, observations regarding adverse medication reactions, transcription of medication orders and other medical-related documentation.
5. Operate and maintain specialized equipment such as adaptive technology, communication devices, breathing or nutritional support equipment, etc., as trained and directed.
6. Effectively manage medical and first aid emergencies.
7. Teach and assist people supported to make medical appointments. Schedule appointments as indicated.
8. Professionally represent OHI at medical appointments. Provide factual, objective information to medical professionals.
9. Correctly implement OHI medical-related policies and procedures.
10. Report symptoms and signs of communicable diseases immediately.
11. Consistently use universal precautions.

**K. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Complete own payroll, travel reimbursement and other employee reimbursements accurately and in a timely manner.
2. Follow through on recommendations to maintain a balanced budget.
3. Assure that policies and procedures are followed to safeguard and account for the funds and resources of persons supported and of OHI in an accurate and timely manner.
4. Notify the supervisor of problems with payroll.
5. Teach people supported to balance, maintain money and expenditure sheets monthly.

**L. HOME RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Assure each home meets city, town, state and federal health, fire and safety codes.
2. Participate professionally in all surveys and inspections.
3. Implement the Fire Prevention, Fire Evacuation and Disaster Plan Policies in each home.
4. Identify, remediate if possible, and report maintenance problems in a timely manner.
5. Participate in Health and Safety Self Inspections on a monthly basis and provide feedback to the supervisor.
6. Complete and submit work orders in a timely manner.
7. Keep entrances and exits free of ice, debris and snow, and properly sanded.
8. Assist with lawn maintenance, as directed.

**M. LICENSING AND ACCREDITATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Take steps to assure each home meets licensing and accreditation regulations and standards.
2. Participate professionally in all applicable licensing and accreditation surveys.
3. Immediately notify the supervisor of all licensing and fire marshal visits.

**N. STAFF MEETING RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Attend and actively participate in all staff meetings.
2. Add topics to the staff meeting agenda.
3. When not present at a staff meeting, review the minutes on the next scheduled workday and document such.
4. Assist with the development of action plans generated at staff meetings for getting tasks accomplished.

**O. IMPLEMENTATION OF SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

1. Follow all agency safety-related policies and procedures.
2. Report medical emergencies as required by policy.
3. Report and take required action in regards to injuries, incidents and accidents involving persons supported by OHI and employees as required by policy.
4. Report physical plant emergencies as required by policy.
5. Follow fire evacuation and disaster procedures correctly and in a timely manner.
6. Report unsafe situations immediately. Assure safety is imperative.
7. Work safely.
8. Report thefts, suspected theft, misuse of funds, property, time, materials and other resources to the supervisor.
9. Report missing persons, medical emergencies, employee injuries and other emergency situations as directed in OHI policies and procedures, to the supervisor or manager on-call immediately.
10. Assure pertinent emergency telephone numbers are readily available.
11. Maintain required levels of supervision and support for people supported at all times.
12. Initiate safety topics at staff meetings.
13. Take steps to prevent safety problems, accidents and injuries.
14. Provide safe and reliable transportation.
15. Report any incident that could potentially result in negative reactions from the community, law enforcement officers and other agencies to the supervisor immediately.

**P. IMPLEMENTATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

1. Follow the chain of command to resolve concerns and conflicts.
2. Dress professionally, according to the Professional Appearance and Attire Policy.
3. Maintain the strictest confidentiality. Protect the privacy of persons supported. Follow all HIPAA policies and procedures.
4. Review and comment on all policies and procedures being proposed or revised, when posted by the supervisor.
5. Report violations of OHI policies and procedures, accreditation standards, philosophy and house rules to the supervisor immediately.
6. Refrain from conducting any personal business while on duty at OHI, unless approved by the supervisor.
7. Assure the Individual Files of people supported are maintained in a current, confidential and organized fashion.
8. Prepare outdated and purged records of people supported for filing and storage.
9. Assure all Individual files are locked when not in use.
10. Report any potential conflicts of interest to the supervisor.

**Q. ATTENDANCE AT WORK, MEETINGS AND TRAINING**

1. Participate in staff meetings, inservices and internal and external assigned committees.

2. Request time off following the Attendance Policy.
3. Work scheduled hours unless otherwise approved by the supervisor.
4. Be punctual to meetings and work.
5. Maintain an acceptable attendance record.
6. Demonstrate willingness and ability to flex schedule to meet needs of persons supported.
7. Work days, evenings, overnights, and weekends, as scheduled.
8. When working a live-in position, provide support and assistance to persons supported during sleep hours, in the event of medical issues, emotional difficulties or behavior issues. Document any time that sleep was interrupted in order to support people on the timesheet.

## **R. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The DSP is responsible to pursue opportunities for professional growth and share knowledge and resources with others. The DSP shall:

1. Join and participate in an agency committee, as approved.
2. Develop and maintain a portfolio.
3. Research and read materials relating to the Direct Support Profession. Share materials and information with colleagues.
4. Actively participate in professional development, inservices, training, and conferences to enhance knowledge and skills in the human services field.
5. Actively participate in monthly fireside chats with supervisor.
6. Take active steps to improve own job performance through work on goals identified in performance reviews, performance improvement plans, and formal or informal observations by colleagues or supervisor.
7. Provide objective feedback to others when asked to complete 360 degree feedback forms.

## **S. DOCUMENTATION AND WRITING RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Complete documentation and writing responsibilities in a timely, accurate, detailed, legible, neat and objective manner, using correct spelling and grammar.
2. Use language and a writing style that thoroughly describes events and incidents.
3. Document the census daily.
4. Complete each person's daily documentation accurately and in a timely manner.
5. Complete all Incident Reports, Emergency Restraint Reports, Critical Incident Report Forms, Reportable Event Forms and other forms accurately and in a timely manner.
6. Compile data for progress reports, as assigned.

## **U. PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION**

1. Initiate projects, anticipate changes or needs, set new priorities, and follow through and meet deadlines.
2. Establish a course of action for self and others to accomplish goals on a daily basis.
3. Keep work site and materials neat and well organized.
4. Set realistic target dates for projects and action plans.

## **V. JUDGMENT**

1. Make logical, sound and proper decisions by drawing on professional expertise with minimal negative effects on people supported, employee relations, and/or OHI goals and results.
2. Take responsibility for decisions made.

**W. TEAMWORK**

1. Identify and communicate successes and challenges within the Team.
2. Accept responsibility for own part in solving Team challenges.
3. Seek new ways to promote Teamwork to improve quality services.
4. Demonstrate pride in, commitment and dedication to the Team.
5. Actively develop strategies to solve Team challenges.
6. Work cooperatively and collaboratively with Team members. Share credit for Team successes and share responsibility for Team failures.

**X. WORK ETHICS STANDARDS**

1. Be highly motivated. Take initiative.
2. Accept responsibilities and approach change enthusiastically.
3. Present self and OHI in a positive, professional manner.
4. Independently seek new and better ways of doing things.

**Y. MISCELLANEOUS RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Actively participate in corporate functions.
2. Complete any other duties as assigned.

**SCHEDULE OF EMPLOYMENT**

(The schedules of DSPs may change to accommodate the needs of people supported)