

THE AD ASTRA DIRECT SUPPORT REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

A staff development plan built on nationally recognized community support skills standards. These standards define the skills a Direct Support Professional (DSP) needs to know to provide high quality support for people with developmental disabilities. The Ad Astra Direct Support Registered Apprenticeship Program provides coherent, step-by-step, multi-level staff training.

CAREER OPTION

"Participating in this program is just going to help me in my job and it's going to help the individuals that I serve..."

Ad Astra Apprentice

People who are seeking meaningful and long-term employment should view direct support as a career. The Ad Astra Direct Support Registered Apprenticeship Program promotes a fundamental shift from direct support as "just another job" to a conscious choice. Registered apprenticeship promotes a career path within direct support that emphasizes the improvement of skills. It

rewards the DSP's increased competency with recognition and appropriate compensation.

Apprenticeship at graduated levels of skill and knowledge can easily be translated to skill-based career advancement. Providing a credential has the potential to enhance the human service field's image to one that is more attractive to both current and potential DSPs. The Kansas Apprenticeship Council has registered this voluntary credentialing program leading to journeyworker status.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM LEVELS

ORIENTATION LEVEL is the entry point to the Apprenticeship Program. Upon completion of 320 hours of employment/internship, successful completion of the employer's specified orientation period and designated Related Instruction, the apprentice/candidate may submit an application to enter the Initial Proficiency Level.

INITIAL PROFICIENCY LEVEL requirements include completion of an additional 1000 hours (cumulative total of 1320) of supervised work experience and additional Related Instruction.

ADVANCED PROFICIENCY LEVEL involves an additional 1680 hours of supervised work experience thereby completing the required 3000 hours. Additional Related Instruction will be completed to meet the cumulative 216 instructional hour requirement. Apprentices will be eligible for journeyworker status recognized by the Kansas Apprenticeship Council.

SPECIALIZATION CERTIFICATE LEVEL opportunities are in development.

MISSION

Ad Astra is a voluntary employee-trainee development program with the mission of improving quality of life for people with support needs and direct support professionals by creating career paths linked to mastery of knowledge, skill, and ethical practice.

HIGH QUALITY TRAINING

The Ad Astra Direct Support Registered Apprenticeship Program provides employers with a coaching protocol involving both mentors/journeyworkers (highly skilled current employees) and Ad Astra apprentices (candidates). The structure of a registered apprenticeship program is used to provide a validated content base that will be useful in guiding program development across a wide range of conditions and locations. Related Instruction assures that critical competencies are incorporated in the locally administered program. Some autonomy exists in developing and selecting curriculum. Registered apprenticeship encourages local creativity in the design of learning materials while assuring continuity in expectations and learner outcomes across Kansas.



AD ASTRA GUIDELINES

Ad Astra will:

- ☀ Provide development opportunities for apprentices/candidates who voluntarily seek to advance their careers in human services
- ☀ Operate within a clear set of procedures determined by stakeholders
- ☀ Offer statewide consistency in competency areas and criteria for success
- ☀ Use a core foundation of validated skills, knowledge and ethical requirements that are relevant to direct support practice across the state
- ☀ Support the integration of agency specific skills, knowledge and ethical requirements as needed
- ☀ Use meaningful, fair and reliable assessment processes aligned with program content
- ☀ Extend its availability to the wide range of DSPs in Kansas and seek endorsements and involvement throughout the state
- ☀ Provide multiple, appropriate levels of challenges that encourage DSP participation
- ☀ Link DSP recognition, wage, and status to skill development
- ☀ Assure that program participants relate their learning to the people they are supporting in their work environments (e.g., on-the-job assessments, portfolio assessments, or mentoring)

Kansans Mobilizing for Direct Support Workforce Change

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A step-by-step, multi-level staff development program for people providing direct support to individuals with intellectual or other disabilities

developed by:

Kansans Mobilizing for Direct Support
Workforce Change

Ad Astra Direct Support Registered
Apprenticeship Program State Council

Kansas Apprenticeship Council

U.S. Department of Labor