

**Job Title:** Direct Support Professional (DSP)  
**Department:** Residential Services  
**Reports To:** House Manager (HM) / Assistant House Manager (AHM)  
**Supervises:** None  
**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt (Hourly)  
**Work Schedule:** Full-time or part-time; varied shifts  
**Location:** Assigned ISL home and community settings  
**On-Call Requirement:** No

### Position Summary

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The Direct Support Professional (DSP) is the primary direct care provider in an Individual Supported Living (ISL) home. DSPs provide hands-on assistance with daily living skills, personal care, medication administration, community access, and documentation in compliance with each individual's Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP), Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) requirements, and Abilities, LLC policies.

DSPs are expected to model respectful, trauma-informed, and person-centered interactions at all times. What a DSP demonstrates, allows, or ignores directly impacts the quality of life, dignity, and safety of the individuals they support. DSPs are the most frequent point of contact for the individuals served and have the greatest direct impact on their daily experience.

### Position Purpose

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The Direct Support Professional role exists to ensure that individuals living in ISL homes receive safe, respectful, person-centered support every day. DSPs carry out the daily work of the home — the direct care, documentation, medication administration, community engagement, and household upkeep that keeps the home running and the individuals supported. This role is the foundation of everything Abilities, LLC does, and the quality of care DSPs provide determines the quality of life the individuals in our homes experience.

### Requirements & Qualifications

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#### Minimum Qualifications

To be hired and remain employed as a Direct Support Professional, an individual must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have a high school diploma or GED
- Have a valid driver's license and insurable driving record
- Be able to pass required background checks per DMH requirements
- Be willing and able to complete all required training and maintain required certifications, including MANDT, Tools of Choice, Level I Med Aide, and other agency-required certifications
- Be able to read, write, and communicate clearly in English
- Pass a drug screen

#### Physical & Environmental Requirements

DSPs must be able to:

- Team lift up to 100 pounds
- Kneel, stoop, crouch, bend, and squat
- Assist a fallen person from the floor with team support
- Sit or stand for extended periods
- Walk, climb stairs, and move throughout homes and community settings
- Drive agency vehicles
- Perform physical interventions and de-escalation techniques as trained through MANDT, when required

### **Technology & System Requirements**

DSPs are required to use the following agency systems as a condition of employment:

- SetWorks — for daily service documentation, time clocking, and incident/event reporting
- WhenToWork — for viewing schedules and shift assignments
- BambooHR — for accessing pay stubs, requesting time off, and completing employee self-service tasks
- WorkTango — for receiving and posting employee recognition
- Gmail (agency-issued work email) — for official agency communications; DSPs must check their work email at least once per week, as important information from agency administration is communicated through email
- Google Chat — for ISL Management communication and shift-related updates

These requirements are conditions of employment and apply to all Direct Support Professionals.

### **Employee Expectations**

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DSPs are expected to uphold the standards and values of Abilities, LLC in every interaction — with the individuals they serve, their coworkers, and their supervisors. They are expected to:

- Model professionalism, ethical conduct, and policy compliance at all times
- Follow all employee expectations without exception
- Read, understand, and follow all agency policies and procedures; all employees are responsible for knowing and complying with agency policies regardless of whether they have signed an acknowledgment — an employee's refusal or failure to read or sign a policy does not exempt them from the obligation to follow it
- Maintain calm, respectful behavior during stress or crisis
- Use positive, supportive approaches when interacting with individuals and coworkers; the same positive behavior support principles that guide how we treat individuals must also guide how we treat one another
- Accept and act on coaching, corrective feedback, and direction from the House Manager and Assistant House Manager
- Complete delegated tasks as directed by the House Manager or Assistant House Manager, on time and to the standard communicated
- Communicate concerns, questions, and updates to leadership through approved communication channels
- Escalate concerns appropriately rather than attempting to resolve issues outside their scope

Failure to meet these expectations is a performance issue and will be addressed accordingly.

### **Role Authority & Scope**

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The DSP is authorized to:

- Provide direct care and support to individuals as outlined in their PCSPs and BSPs
- Administer medications when certified as a Level I Med Aide, following the Triple Check process and real-time eMAR documentation
- Complete required daily documentation, eMAR entries, and event reports
- Implement approved positive behavior support strategies as written in BSPs
- Take individuals on community outings, including when an individual requests to go out; local activities or activities within an hour of Warrensburg do not require prior authorization
- Assist individuals with personal spending when the individual needs or requests support, ensuring purchases reflect the individual's own choices and preferences
- Report concerns, changes in health status, and incidents to the AHM or House Manager immediately
- Report maintenance or repair needs to the AHM or House Manager

The DSP does not:

- Modify PCSPs, BSPs, physician orders, or rights restrictions
- Make clinical or medical decisions; medical concerns must be escalated to the AHM, House Manager, or Nursing
- Create new behavior rules, consequences, or restrictions
- Discipline or formally correct other employees
- Spend an individual's money in the individual's absence or decide for the individual what to buy
- Interpret agency policy on behalf of Abilities, LLC or invent explanations, exceptions, or house rules
- Plan trips further than one hour from Warrensburg without House Manager or RPM approval
- Make scheduling decisions or changes without direction from the House Manager or AHM

When policy questions arise, DSPs should refer to written policy when available and direct questions to the House Manager, AHM, or Human Resources.

### **Escalation Pathway**

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DSPs are responsible for addressing routine tasks within the home and escalating concerns beyond their scope. Issues that cannot be resolved on shift must be escalated to the on-shift AHM or House Manager.

#### **DSP → AHM (on shift) → House Manager → Residential Program Manager (RPM) → Director of Residential Operations**

Serious concerns involving health, safety, compliance, or misconduct must be escalated immediately. DSPs are expected to document concerns and follow up as directed.

## Open-Door Communication

If a concern involves ethics, rights, retaliation, misconduct, or if the DSP is uncomfortable using the standard pathway, the DSP may contact Human Resources or leadership directly.

## Core Responsibilities

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### 1. Direct Care & Person-Centered Support

DSPs are responsible for providing safe, respectful, and person-centered support to each individual in the home. This includes:

- Providing hands-on assistance with daily living skills including bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting, eating, and mobility
- Following each individual's Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP) exactly as written
- Supporting individual choice, dignity, privacy, and independence in all interactions
- Actively engaging with individuals throughout the shift — not sitting, scrolling, or disengaging while on duty
- Assisting individuals with meal preparation based on their preferences, dietary needs, physician orders, and PCSP requirements
- Ensuring individuals have access to food, beverages, and personal belongings at all times in accordance with their rights
- Modeling respectful, trauma-informed, and person-centered interactions for others to observe and follow

### 2. Medication Administration

DSPs who have completed Level I Med Aide certification are authorized to administer medications. This includes:

- Administering medications only when certified and authorized to do so
- Following the Triple Check process every time, without exception
- Completing eMAR documentation in real time — not after the fact or from memory
- Ensuring proper storage, labeling, and organization of all medications
- Reporting medication errors, refusals, or discrepancies to the AHM or House Manager immediately
- Never administering medications that are not prescribed to the individual, that have been discontinued, or that have unclear instructions without first contacting the House Manager or Nursing

Medication safety directly affects the health and safety of the individuals supported. Errors, shortcuts, or documentation failures are treated as serious performance concerns.

### 3. Documentation & Communication

DSPs are responsible for accurate, timely documentation and professional communication. This includes:

- Completing daily service documentation in SetWorks for each individual supported during the shift

- Completing eMAR entries in real time
- Completing Event Reports and incident documentation in SetWorks accurately and promptly
- Clocking in and out using SetWorks for accurate timekeeping
- Using approved communication platforms only; documenting shift concerns in the ISL Management Google Chat, and using private email when the issue involves sensitive or confidential topics
- Providing clear, complete shift-to-shift communication so the next team has everything they need
- Following Communication Policy requirements regarding shared chats vs. private email

Documentation is not optional and is a compliance requirement. What is not documented is considered not done.

#### **4. Positive Behavior Support**

DSPs are expected to actively use positive behavior support skills learned through the MANDT System, Tools of Choice, and training, coaching, and guidance from the Behavior Services Department. This includes:

- Responding to behavior with support, skill-building, and de-escalation, not punishment
- Following Behavior Support Plans (BSPs) exactly as written
- Recognizing when a situation is escalating beyond routine support and asking for help early
- Documenting behavioral concerns, patterns, and responses clearly
- Never creating new behavior rules, consequences, or restrictions
- Never implementing strategies not approved in the BSP or PCSP
- Never presenting personal opinions as behavior policy or as what the agency says

Behavior decisions and interpretations belong to Behavior Services, the House Manager, RPMs, and leadership. DSPs implement approved strategies — they do not create or modify them.

Positive behavior support is not limited to the individuals we serve. Abilities, LLC expects all employees to apply the same principles of respect, de-escalation, patience, and skill-building in their interactions with one another. Yelling, shaming, intimidation, or punitive responses toward coworkers are not acceptable.

#### **5. Household Maintenance & Daily Operations**

DSPs are responsible for maintaining a clean, safe, and organized home throughout their shift. This includes:

- Completing assigned household tasks including cleaning, laundry, dishes, and tidying common areas and individual rooms
- Following posted cleaning schedules and house routines
- Ensuring the home is free of safety hazards and in compliance with Licensure and Certification (L&C) standards at all times

- Following Maintenance Department care instructions for equipment and property (e.g., not overfilling washing machines, cleaning out vacuums after use)
- Reporting maintenance or repair needs to the AHM or House Manager so a work order can be submitted
- Monitoring household supplies and reporting shortages to the AHM or House Manager before they become a problem

The home should always be in a condition that would be ready for an unannounced visit from a family member or a regulatory auditor.

## **6. Community Inclusion & Engagement**

Inclusiveness is important. DSPs share responsibility for ensuring individuals spend meaningful time in their communities doing things they enjoy. This includes:

- Taking individuals into the community when they request or want to go out; individuals do not need to wait for a scheduled outing to leave the home
- Supporting the House Manager's and AHM's goal that every individual leaves the home at least every other day (3–4 times per week minimum)
- Engaging individuals in activities based on their interests and hobbies — fishing, going to parks, playing outside, shopping, going to movies, joining local groups, clubs, or sports, and other activities the individual enjoys
- Understanding that community outings do not include trips to doctor's offices, pharmacies, banks, or grocery shopping; these are necessary errands, not community engagement
- Choosing inclusive community settings where individuals participate alongside people without disabilities
- Being aware of each individual's monthly mileage allotment and supporting responsible mileage use during outings

Community inclusion is not optional and should not be treated as a reward or something that only happens when it is convenient. Individuals have the right to participate in their communities.

## **7. Emergency Response & Preparedness**

DSPs are expected to respond to emergencies calmly and in accordance with training and protocols. This includes:

- Knowing and following emergency procedures for the assigned home, including fire, tornado, medical emergency, and elopement protocols
- Knowing the location of emergency equipment, exits, and posted emergency plans
- Participating in required emergency drills
- Reporting all emergencies and incidents to the AHM, House Manager, or Administrator On-Call immediately

## **8. Individual Rights & HCBS Compliance**

DSPs are responsible for protecting and supporting the rights of the individuals they serve. This includes:

- Ensuring individuals have access to food, personal belongings, private space, and communication at all times
- Supporting individual choice — even when the DSP would prefer a different decision
- Never restricting rights without a formally approved, documented rights restriction in place
- Maintaining confidentiality and ensuring no Protected Health Information (PHI) is posted in common areas
- Ensuring adaptive equipment is present, clean, functional, and used as trained
- Reporting any suspected abuse, neglect, or rights violations immediately per mandatory reporting requirements

## 9. Training & Professional Development

DSPs are expected to actively participate in their own training and professional development. This includes:

- Completing all required initial and ongoing trainings on time
- Participating fully in onboarding using agency training checklists and demonstrating competency before working independently
- Accepting and applying coaching, corrective feedback, and retraining from the House Manager and AHM
- Pursuing the Certified Direct Support Professional (C-DSP) program as a pathway for career growth and increased compensation
- Staying current on PCSPs, BSPs, medication changes, and house-specific routines for every individual in the home

## Our Values & Ethical Expectations

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Abilities, LLC values Integrity, Community, and Empathy. As a Direct Support Professional, ethical conduct, professional behavior, and consistent role modeling are essential to maintaining a safe, compliant, and person-centered home. DSPs are expected to demonstrate these values in all interactions with individuals, coworkers, families, and supervisors. Our values apply equally to how we treat the individuals we serve and how we treat the employees who serve them.

- **Integrity:** DSPs are expected to be honest and transparent in all documentation and communication, follow all policies and service plans as written, report concerns and errors immediately, and hold themselves to the same standards they are held to by leadership.
- **Community:** DSPs are expected to work collaboratively with the AHM, House Manager, and the broader team. This includes supporting new employees during onboarding, communicating clearly across shifts, and contributing to a positive team culture. Concerns related to workplace morale, team culture, or employee experience should be directed to the Director of Culture & Experience (DCE).
- **Empathy:** DSPs are expected to model person-centered care and positive support in all interactions — with the individuals they serve and with the coworkers they work alongside. This means treating individuals and staff alike with dignity, patience, and genuine respect. The same positive behavior support principles that guide how we treat the individuals we serve must also guide how we treat one another. Empathy is not optional.



DSPs are expected to always uphold these ethical and values-based expectations. Failure to do so may result in corrective action, up to and including termination.

**Acknowledgment & Signature**

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By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand this job description. I understand that the expectations outlined are a condition of my employment. I further understand that I am responsible for knowing and complying with all Abilities, LLC policies and procedures, and that my refusal or failure to sign or read any policy does not relieve me of the obligation to follow it.

This job description is not intended to be an all-encompassing list of every duty, task, or expectation associated with this role. It outlines the primary responsibilities and standards as of the date of issuance. When regulatory or agency changes occur, employees in this role are expected to adapt quickly and follow all new guidance, directives, and procedures communicated by Abilities, LLC leadership, even if those changes have not yet been formally incorporated into this job description.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_