

## **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION TRAINING POLICY**

It is the intent of this policy to assure the availability of training so that those who support individuals with developmental disabilities acquire the knowledge, skills and sensitivity to meet the needs of those individuals, consistent with the mission and vision of the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA).

### **MISSION**

The mission of the Developmental Disabilities Administration is to provide leadership to assure the participation of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in all aspects of community life and to promote their empowerment to access quality supports and services necessary to foster personal growth, independence and productivity.

### **VISION**

The Developmental Disabilities Administration takes the leadership role in building partnership and trust with families, providers, local and state agencies, and advocates to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have access to the resources necessary to foster growth, including those resources available to the general public. Because of the inherent belief in the rights and dignity of the individual, we are committed to:

- The empowerment of all individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to choose the services and supports that meet their needs;
- Integration of individuals with developmental disabilities into community life to foster participation;
- The provision of quality supports, based on consumer satisfaction, that maximizes individual growth and development;
- The establishment of a fiscally responsible, flexible service system that makes the best use of the resources that the citizens of Maryland have allocated for serving individuals with developmental disabilities.

Although it is not always the responsibility of DDA to provide training, it is in fact the responsibility of the Administration to:

**I. Identify and prioritize training needs within the service delivery system, with the input of all stakeholders**

1. The training needs of all stakeholders (service providers, service recipients and their families) will be identified through formal bi-annual needs assessments and informal survey mechanisms.
  - a. Standardized needs assessment tools will be distributed to and completed by service providers, individuals receiving supports and their families on a bi-annual basis.
  - b. Training needs will also become known through licensure surveys, incident investigations, other monitoring activities, and informal contacts with statewide groups, e.g., MACS, People On the Go, etc.
2. With information from these sources, each regional office will prepare a training plan that will be submitted to the headquarters office for review and approval. The regional training plans, in conjunction with statewide training initiatives, will comprise the annual statewide training plan.
3. State training funds will be distributed to each region based upon the needs identified in the region's training plan with attention to the current priorities and initiatives of the Statewide Training Advisory Group. This group will be comprised of the statewide training coordinator from each region, the training coordination, the University Affiliated Program (UAP), the Licensing and Certification Administration (LCA), individuals receiving supports, family members, the DD Council and the protection and advocacy agency (MDLC).

**II. Assure consistency of interpretations and implementation Of all federal and state law, regulations and policies**

1. DDA will offer training/information dissemination to all stakeholders, including LCA staff as appropriate, on all new federal and state laws, regulations, policies, practices and initiatives as well as on substantive modifications to or interpretations of any of the preceding. Minor changes in law, regulation, policy, etc. will be communicated in writing in a timely manner, allowing the stakeholders ample opportunity to ask and receive answers to questions. In order to make best use of training resources, a train the trainer approach may be used for certain types of training.
2. For each training that is presented, there will be a mechanism for measuring the outcomes, i.e., to assess the success in achieving the objectives of the training. These mechanisms maybe, for example:
  - a. A factual written test;
  - b. A demonstration of competence in acquiring a skill;
  - c. A documented assessment by DDA or LCA of the increase in quality of service provided by an agency or an individual within a prescribed time period after the training; or
  - d. A subjective assessment by the members of the audience of the value of the

training.

3. DDA will collect and analyze data on training outcomes to improve training curricula and presentations and also to identify where there may be gaps in regulations, polices, etc. or problems in interpretations of same.
4. In some instances, it may be necessary for DDA to develop training curricula and/or materials to assure consistency of interpretation and compliance with regulations, i.e., medication administration and management of disruptive behaviors. In these instances a train the trainer approach has been used.
5. For purposes of this policy, technical assistance is defined as advice or information that is provided to ameliorate an existing problem or improve current practices.
  - a. An agency may request technical assistance at any time by verbal or written request to the training coordinator in theft region.
  - b. Technical assistance may also be provided at the discretion of DDA and/or LCA when the need for advice or information is indicated as a result of a licensing survey, an incident investigation, other monitoring or at the request of an individual receiving support, a family member or advocate.
  - c. It is critical that technical assistance be timely and responsive to the severity of need, based on either DDA or LCA's determination.
  - d. Technical assistance may be provided by DDA staff, or DDA will identify appropriate sources of information or assistance and/or provide linkages with other sources.
  - e. DDA will advise LCA of the technical assistance that is provided by DDA, in follow up to concerns identified during LCA and DDA monitoring activities.

### **III. Identify appropriate sources of training and develop new sources when none exist**

1. There will be a statewide training coordinator who will:
  - a. Work collaboratively with the regional training coordinators to facilitate the sharing of information, ideas and resources, to identify system-wide gaps in training and the most appropriate and cost-effective means of bridging those gaps;
  - b. Assure that best practice training is available and, or the extent possible, assure that the training being provided across the state reflects what is currently regarded as best practice;
  - c. Staff the Statewide Training Advisory Committee, which will assist in the development of the statewide training plan, will provide a forum for Identifying gaps in training not otherwise identified, for sharing information on and assessments of available training, for fostering the sharing of resources and for developing innovative training techniques and initiatives.
2. A training coordinator will be assigned to each region to:

- a. Assist the region in imbedding the mission and vision of DDA in all of its training, whether provided directly or through a contract.
  - b. Maintain responsibility for the implementation of the region's training plan;
  - c. Broker and develop training to meet identified needs;
  - d. Disseminate information about relevant training that is occurring in and outside of the region and
  - e. Work in partnership with educational institutions such as community colleges and provider training networks, advocacy agencies, state and local government agencies and the UAP to assure that training is available that provides fundamental and remedial education, addresses agency and system-wide gaps, promotes innovation, and enhances quality of service beyond minimum requirements.
3. DDA will maintain affiliations, relationships and communications with many local and national organizations that provide information and training opportunities, such as the American Association on Mental Retardation, the Association for Individuals with Severe Handicaps, the Maryland State Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Arc of Maryland, the Maryland association of Community Services, the Governor's office for Individuals with Disabilities, Maryland Office on Aging, Office of Children Youth and Families and other generic training organizations. The DDA Director is also a member of the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.
- ❖ In addition to the ongoing dialogues that will be maintained with these organizations, DDA will participate in forums with these agencies and receive newsletters and policy statements that articulate national and even international trends, best practices and innovations.
  - ❖ DDA will partner with these agencies to sponsor and support best practice training with recognized experts. These training will be made available to providers, DDA and LCA staff; individuals receiving services and their families, as appropriate. To the extent that funding is available, DDA and LCA staff will also be permitted and encouraged to participate in other conferences and workshops to acquire knowledge and skills to improve theft job performance.
  - ❖ When there are broad needs and a lack of appropriate resources, it may be incumbent upon DDA to research and develop training curricula and/or materials.

#### **IV. Develop strategies to maximize available resources**

1. The DDA Headquarters and regional offices will maintain libraries of training materials. The training materials will be catalogued and catalogues will be reviewed annually. Out of date materials will be removed, and as funds are available, new materials will be purchased in an attempt to keep each library current. These lists of materials will be distributed upon request so that internal staff, providers, individuals receiving support and theft families may be aware of the resources that are available. Resource libraries will be referenced in all training newsletters, as a means of advertising their existence. Upon request, anyone may review or borrow material from resource libraries. Regional training coordinators and the state wide training coordinator are responsible for tracking any materials in their office or those borrowed from other regions.

2. A quarterly newsletter announcing upcoming training across the state and elsewhere will be developed by the statewide training coordinator. It will be published and distributed to DDA and LCA staff, MEA, DDA providers, advocates, self-advocacy groups and Local Health Departments.
3. The Statewide training coordinator maintains a data base of both national and local trainers on various topics related to supporting people with developmental disabilities. The information is arranged alphabetically by last name of the trainer and by topic. Information about the listing and how to access it will be published on an annual basis in the quarterly training newsletter as well as being announced at various MACS and DDA training forums. The list is updated on an ongoing basis. While DDA manages this information it does not endorse any particular trainer's credentials. It is the responsibility of the person or agency interested in hiring that trainer to establish that the trainer has the necessary expertise to provide the needed training.
4. DDA will encourage and facilitate linkages, especially between providers who require technical assistance and providers with demonstrated competencies. Information about technical assistance needs will be based on LCA surveys, regional office experience with agencies through theft quality monitoring and provider requests. Information about providers with demonstrated competencies will be based on LCA surveys and regional office assessments. The regional training coordinator, with the assistance of regional office staff, will facilitate these linkages.
5. MACS and other similar professional agencies will be utilized to provide training and technical assistance, in areas of their particular expertise.
6. When systemic training needs are identified by DDA, either through the bi-annual needs assessment process or other less formal mechanisms, DDA arranges for training to be available to all appropriate audiences.

**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ADMINISTRATION  
TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the DDA Training Advisory Group is to advise the DDA on training issues affecting the Developmental Disabilities community.

**SCOPE:** The Training Advisory Group deals with training issues relating to:

1. Agencies, families, consumers, and facilities
2. The availability of resources, e.g. training curricula, materials, aids, etc.
3. The impact of proposed regulations
4. Innovative and creative ways of implementing training programs, including technology assisted learning
5. Any other training deemed appropriate for training staff and others who work with people with developmental disabilities

**COMPOSITION:** The Advisory Group shall have a membership representing the following:

1. Appropriate DDA Staff e.g., Regional Training Coordinators, Regulations, Regional Health Liaison
2. Office of Health Care Quality
3. Providers
4. Self Advocates
5. Parents
6. Advocacy Organizations
7. Developmental Disabilities Council
8. State Residential Centers
9. Maryland Disability Law Center
10. Kennedy Krieger (University Affiliated Programs)
11. MACS (Maryland Association for Community Services)

**FUNCTIONING:**

The Training Advisory Group shall meet at least once per quarter, at a time and place convenient for its members. The Group may meet more frequently, if the workload so requires. The Group is to be chaired by a member of the Group, so elected by the Group. The term of the Chairperson shall be for 2 years (there is no limit on the number of consecutive terms to which an individual may be elected.) The Chairperson is responsible for preparing the agenda, and determining the time, place, length, and frequency of the meetings. The DDA Assistant Director for Programs shall serve as liaison between the Administration and The Group. Individuals wanting to have concerns addressed by The Group should direct their concerns, by calling (410) 767-5630, (fax) (410) 767- 5850, or by writing to: Statewide Training Coordinator, DDA, 4th floor, 201 W. Preston St., Baltimore, MD 21201.

Updated 12/22/99