

Credentialing Opportunities for OPWDD Direct Care Employees

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What is the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) and what is the E-Badge Academy?

- NADSP provides organizations like OPWDD with tools, such as NADSP certifications, to help employees succeed in providing quality supports to individuals with developmental disabilities.
- The NADSP E-Badge Academy is a software program that allows direct care employees, enrolled in the NADSP Certification program, to submit “testimonials.” These testimonials help employees demonstrate how they applied the Code of Ethics and Core Competencies while delivering person centered support. The e-badges represent the individual competencies needed to earn the various certifications.

Q2. What is the benefit of earning a certification?

- Direct Care employees participating in the certification process report that they have learned how to better deliver person-centered support. Direct Care employees are communicating better, their interactions are more intentional with individuals, and they take pride in their nationally recognized certification. Employees are also eligible for a bonus upon completion of each certification described in question 6 below.

Q3. What is required to earn each level of certification?

- Certification is comprised of two components: a required number of hours of NADSP accredited training and successful completion of a series of e-badges. Each level of the certification program builds towards the next level. For example, a participant who completes DSP-1 took 50 hours of training and completed 15 badges, so they only need to complete 50 additional hours of training and 15 additional badges to earn their DSP-II certification. The chart below illustrates the requirements for each level.
- **OPWDD Direct Care employees who successfully completed new employee orientation (NEO) can apply this towards the required training. Employees can print a certificate of completion from the Statewide Learning Management System (SLMS) to submit to NADSP.**

Certification	DSP-I	DSP-II	DSP-III	FLS
Training	50 hours	100 hours	0	25 hours
Badges	15	30	50	14

Q4. Am I required to get certified as a Direct Care employee?

- OPWDD Direct Care employee participation is voluntary, and employees will complete certification activities on their own time.

Q5. How much are the bonus payments and when will I receive them?

- Direct Care employees can earn up to \$2,250. CSEA will issue quarterly incentive payments to those CSEA members that receive their certification by the end of each calendar quarter. For example, Direct Care employees who achieve certification in January, February or March will receive their bonus payment in April.

Certification	DSP-I	DSP-II	DSP-III	FLS
Bonus Payment	\$500	\$750	\$1,000	\$1,000

Q6. Does a frontline supervisor (FLS) need to complete the DSP certification before they can take the FLS training and certification?

- DSP certifications are open to all OPWDD Direct Care employees. You do not need to complete a DSP certification to acquire FLS certification. Employees currently serving in the following titles are especially encouraged to obtain the FLS certification: Developmental Assistant 1 (DA1), Developmental Assistant 2 (DA2), Developmental Assistant 3 (DA3), Developmental Disabilities Secure Care Treatment Aid 2 (DDSCTA2), Senior Licensed Practical Nurse 1 (SR LPN1), Senior Licensed Practical Nurse 2 (SR LPN2) and Supervising Licensed Practical Nurse (SLPN).

Q7. Who is eligible for the credential opportunity and how do I apply?

- CSEA members, working in direct care titles, are eligible to complete the Direct Care Provider application and email to: workforceteam@opwdd.ny.gov. OPWDD Workforce Team will email approved applicants with information on how to access the e-badge academy.

Q8. When is my application due?

- OPWDD Workforce Team accepts applications on a continuous basis until all spaces in the program are filled. The deadline for the first quarter is March 31st. Participants are required to complete their certifications by October 2024.

Q9. Are the stipend payments I receive subject to tax withholding?

- Stipend payments to employees are considered taxable. Employees should consult with a tax professional regarding the tax treatment of the stipend payment.

Q10. If there is a suspicion of fraud in my submissions, how is that addressed? Does NADSP have a fraud policy?

- In the process of certification, individuals must follow the path of responsible, forthright work and actions that represent the NADSP Code of Ethics. Individuals who engage in or are discovered to have engaged in fraud will have any certifications based on a fraudulent submission revoked and will be removed from the e-Badge Academy platform. For more information on NADSP's fraud policy please see the following link for more information: [NADSP Certification Fraud Policy](#)



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Q11. Who do I contact with questions or assistance?

- Please email questions to: workforceteam@opwdd.ny.gov