

Temporary Waiver of High School Diploma/ GED Requirements for Direct Support Professionals

Employers throughout Ohio are facing an unprecedented workforce crisis. Agency providers and residential facilities certified or licensed by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities are no exception. In response, last year, DODD issued a one-year waiver of the requirement that all direct support professionals have a high school diploma or certificate of high school equivalence (“GED”) effective September 17, 2021 through September 30, 2022. The Department’s goal was to supplement the workforce with talented individuals who may not meet the formal education requirements in rule but are otherwise well-qualified to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities. Overall, the Department has seen the benefits of this waiver and desires to continue the waiver as one solution to the workforce crisis.

The agency provider certification rule, Ohio Adm. Code 5123-2-08, and the licensed residential facility rule, Ohio Adm. Code 5123:2-3-01 (effective 12/1/22 this will be replaced with Ohio Adm. Code 5123-3-01), require that all direct support professionals have a high school diploma or GED. The department can waive provisions of both rules for good cause. See Ohio Adm. Code 5123-2-08(T) and 5123-3-10(C).

For good cause shown, Ohio Adm. Code 5123-2-08(J)(1)(b) and Ohio Adm. Code 5123:2-3-01(F)(1)(c) (effective 12/1/22 this will be replaced with Ohio Adm. Code 5123-3-01(F)(2)) are waived **effective September 30, 2022, through September 30, 2023**. During this time, agency providers and licensed facilities are permitted to hire direct support professionals without a high school diploma or GED. The agency or licensed facility must confirm the direct support professional meets all other qualifications and must continue to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities receive quality services provided by capable staff. Direct support professionals hired during this time without a high school diploma or GED will be permitted to work for the same agency after the waiver period if they maintain continuous employment with that agency and comply with all other applicable statutes and rules.

Rendered this 13 day of September 2022.



Kim Hauck, Director