

Direct Support Professional University

Direct Support Professionals may now enroll in the Direct Support Professional University (DSPU). This program is a competency-based training and certification program specifically for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs). The DSPU is designed to have three different tiers of enhanced training aimed at promoting services that are person centered, culturally and linguistically sensitive, and that improve outcomes for individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

Participation in the DSPU is completely voluntary. To be eligible, DSPs must meet all requirements and responsibilities outlined below.

- Primarily providing direct support to children and/or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Providing support and supervision.
- Supporting individuals to learn new skills or continue to perform tasks independently.
- Ensuring optimal health and safety and assisting with household upkeep to maintain a clean, safe, and hazard-free environment.
- Assisting individuals with IDD with skills development, guidance, and personal assistance.
- Spending at least 50 percent of their work hours performing direct support tasks.
- Being funded by a regional center.

Training Structure

DSPU includes three training tiers:

1. Tier 1: Provides DSPs with a foundational understanding of the context in which they work, the individuals they support, and the core knowledge and skills necessary to encourage health, safety, and well-being.
2. Tier 2: Focuses on strengthening DSP practices to promote higher-level quality of life outcomes beyond safety and physical well-being.
 - Please note that the Mandatory Reporting training courses included in Tier 2 will only be paid once by the Department per DSP per certificate.
3. Tier 3: Provides either greater depth on previously covered topics or advanced specialization in specific areas of practice.

Enrollment and Participation

1. DSP accesses the online enrollment form.

2. DSP completes the form, providing their personal information and their employer information.
3. After enrollment form submission, the DSP receives an email with their username and temporary password to login to EDGE and access DSPU courses.
4. DSP completes tiers.

Other important information about the DSPU:

- This program is online and can be paused and resumed at the DSP's convenience.
- DSPs are not expected to complete DSPU training during working hours unless specified by their employer.
- If participating in the DSPU, DSPs are required to take tiers in sequential order.

More information can be found at: [Workforce Initiatives: CA Department of Developmental Services](#)

