



March 29, 2020

OPWDD Interim Guidance Regarding Modified Training and Recertifications to Address COVID-19 Emergency Response

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 202.11, residential and nonresidential facilities and programs certified or operated by OPWDD may immediately modify certain training requirements for direct support professionals to address staffing shortages and COVID-19 emergency response. Those requirements contained within 14 NYCRR sections 633.16 are temporarily modified, as outlined within this document, to provide the greatest amount of flexibility possible to providers of services for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

Modified Training Requirements Under Section 633.16

With respect to trainings required under Section 633.16, OPWDD certified providers may immediately modify these trainings in order to expedite their onboarding processes, to address COVID-19 related staffing shortages. Consideration should be given to the following:

- To maintain appropriate levels of support, agencies should consider a targeted approach to staff training as required under 633.16. Specifically, during the emergency period, only direct support professionals who will be deployed to work with individuals who have challenging behaviors that require a behavior support plan (BSP) that incorporates the use of intermediate or restrictive physical interventions should be trained in Strategies for Crisis Intervention and Prevention-Revised (SCIP-R) or Positive Relationships Offer More Opportunities to Everyone (PROMOTE).
- Staff responsible for implementing behavior support plans (BSP) that incorporate the use of physical intervention technique(s) must successfully complete an OPWDD-approved training course on the use of positive behavioral approaches, strategies and/or supports and physical intervention techniques. Staff should only be trained to the level of certification that includes the physical intervention techniques necessary to implement the BSPs of individuals they will be supporting in the certified programs where they primarily work (e.g., SCIP-R Core, PROMOTE Level 1). If staff are not implementing a BSP that requires a restrictive physical intervention, they do not need to be trained in those techniques.
- Agencies should consider modified training formats and alternate delivery methods for staff training, including video conferencing, as well as ways to implement social distancing during the lecture and small group activity portions of the training;
- For current direct support professionals, who have previously completed all training requirements, the annual training recertification will be extended ninety days.