

AN ACT concerning State government.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Administrative Act is amended by changing Section 4.4 as follows:

(20 ILCS 1705/4.4)

Sec. 4.4. Direct support professional credential pilot program.

(a) In this Section, "direct support person credential" means a document issued to an individual by a recognized accrediting body attesting that the individual has met the professional requirements of the credentialing program by the Division of Developmental Disabilities of the Department of Human Services.

(b) The Division or a Division partner shall initiate a program to continue to gain the expertise and knowledge of the developmental disabilities workforce and of the developmental disabilities workforce recruitment and retention needs throughout the developmental disabilities field. The Division shall implement a direct support professional credential pilot program to assist and attract persons into the field of direct support, advance direct support as a career, and

professionalize the field to promote workforce recruitment and retention efforts, advanced skills and competencies, and further ensure the health, safety, and well-being of persons being served.

(c) The direct support professional credential pilot program is created within the Division to assist persons in the field of developmental disabilities in obtaining a credential in their fields of expertise.

(d) The pilot program shall be administered by the Division for 3 years, beginning in Fiscal Year 2025 ~~2024~~. The pilot program shall include providers licensed and certified by the Division or by the Department of Public Health. The purpose of the pilot program is to assess how the establishment of a State-administered direct support professional credential:

(1) promotes recruitment and retention efforts in the developmental disabilities field, notably the direct support professional position;

(2) enhances competence in the developmental disabilities field;

(3) yields quality supports and services to persons with developmental disabilities; and

(4) advances the health and safety requirements set forth by the State.

(e) The Division or a Division partner, in administering the pilot program, shall consider, but not be limited to, the

following:

(1) best practices learning initiatives, including the University of Minnesota's college of direct support and all Illinois Department of Human Services-approved direct support professional competencies;

(2) national direct support professional competencies or credentialing-based standards and trainings;

(3) facilitating direct support professional's portfolio development;

(4) the role and value of skill mentors; and

(5) creating a career ladder.

(f) The Division shall produce a report detailing the progress of the pilot program, including, but not limited to:

(1) the rate of recruitment and retention for direct support professionals of providers participating in the pilot program compared to the rate for non-participating providers;

(2) the number of direct support professional credentialed; and

(3) the enhancement of quality supports and services to persons with developmental disabilities.

(Source: P.A. 101-81, eff. 7-12-19; 102-830, eff. 1-1-23.)

Section 10. The School Code is amended by changing Section 2-3.195 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.195)

Sec. 2-3.195. Direct support professional training program. Beginning with the 2026-2027 ~~2025-2026~~ school year and continuing for not less than 2 years, the State Board of Education shall make available a model program of study that incorporates the training and experience necessary to serve as a direct support professional. By July 1, 2025 ~~2023~~, the Department of Human Services shall submit recommendations developed in consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to, organizations representing community-based providers serving children and adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and education practitioners, including, but not limited to, teachers, administrators, special education directors, and regional superintendents of schools, to the State Board for the training that would be required in order to complete the model program of study.

(Source: P.A. 102-874, eff. 1-1-23; 103-154, eff. 6-30-23; 103-175, eff. 6-30-23.)

Section 15. The Public Community College Act is amended by changing Section 2-27 as follows:

(110 ILCS 805/2-27)

Sec. 2-27. Direct support professional training program. By July 1, 2026 ~~2025~~, the State Board shall submit recommendations for a model program of study, for credit, that

incorporates the training and experience necessary to serve as a direct support professional to the Department of Human Services. The model program of study shall be developed in consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to, organizations representing community-based providers serving children and adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and elementary and secondary education practitioners, including, but not limited to, teachers, administrators, special education directors, and regional superintendents of schools. Beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year and continuing for not less than 2 academic years, the State Board shall make available to community colleges the model program of study developed under this Section.

(Source: P.A. 103-92, eff. 1-1-24.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.