

A QUICK GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Introduction

Since the inception of the Department of Developmental Services' Licensure and Certification process in 1994, the tool and process have periodically been revisited to refine and strengthen the system drawing upon input from individuals, families, providers, staff of the Office of Quality Enhancement and DDS, as well as a review of national trends in the area of quality management and improvement. The current tools and processes reflect the collective wisdom of these various stakeholders with recommendations made to the Commissioner by a joint workgroup of providers and DDS staff.

The process and tools undergo ongoing revision to make the survey tools and process more transparent, objective and quantifiable, while at the same time maintaining the focus on positive outcomes in the lives of individuals.

The Process

There is one integrated process for all services with indicators tailored to the specific services being reviewed. Findings are reported out separately for licensure and certification.

Licensure reviews essential safeguards that are considered threshold requirements in order for a provider to serve adults with intellectual disability in Massachusetts. Separate licenses are issued for Residential/Home Supports and Employment/Day Supports. If an agency provides both of these Service Groupings, they would receive 2 licenses.

Certification is the process by which the quality of a provider's supports is reviewed. Indicators are tailored for specific services and should promote quality and responsive services and when implemented be predictive of positive outcomes in the lives of individuals. These indicators are equally as important as the licensure indicators and represent a focus for continual quality improvement on the part of the provider. Certification information on each service type rolls up and the agency receives a Certification level for Residential/Home Supports and Employment/Day Supports. If an agency provides all of these services, they would be Certified.

Sample Selection is based upon conducting a prescribed number of "audits" to review the supports of different individuals for different indicators. The number of sites to be visited and individual audits conducted will be based upon a standard that takes into account the number of people served by the agency within each service type, differences between service types, the number of sites, and the number of DDS administrative regions in which the agency had a significant number of sites. Site and individual audits will be randomly selected.

The process begins with **off-site pre-survey** activities during which surveyors review a variety of available information, such as through the Home and Community Services Information System (HCSIS), to inform many of the indicators being reviewed.

This is followed by the **administrative review**. This review focuses on agency internal systems for ensuring quality services, often with validation on-site. During the administrative review the agency will be informed of the sites to be audited and the individuals to be audited for site-less (e.g. employment supports) services.

The **on-site review** consists of:

- **Physical site review** - *for site based services such as 24 hour residential services.*
- **Documentation review** – *of individual and site based information to be used in conduction with other survey activities to rate indicators.*
- **Observation** – *may be more limited in some services offered in community locations such as supported employment*
- **Discussion and interviews** – *with key staff, care providers and individuals*

The goal is to limit activities at the agency to no more than 5 days.

The Tools

There are two separate tools for licensure and certification. Both tools contain discrete indicators for review. The indicators were developed to enhance transparency, more objectivity and to be more quantifiable. The tools are organized in a way to enhance clarity about expectations for each indicator.

The **licensure tool** contains the following sections:

- Personal safety
- Environmental safety
- Communication
- Health
- Human Rights
- Competent and skilled workforce
- Goal development, skill acquisition and implementation of Individual Service plans.

The licensure tool also includes 8 critical indicators each of which must be in place in order for a provider to be licensed.

The **certification tool** identifies service expectations for discrete services, universal service expectations across all services and organizational expectations for the agency. The following domains are present within certification:

- Planning and quality improvement
- Communication
- Supporting Relationships

- Choice, control and growth
- Career Planning and development
- Meaningful day activities
- Community access and integration

Types of services which are licensed and certified

Residential / Individual Home Support Services:

- 24 hour residential supports
- ABI 24 hour residential supports
- Placement services
- ABI Placement services
- Individualized home supports (survey those receiving >15 hours/ week of service)
- Respite (not certified)

Employment/ Day Supports:

- Employment supports including individual and group supported employment
- Community based day supports

Survey Results

Survey results are presented in two ways. First survey results are presented through the Service Enhancement Meeting, which includes the team and key managers from the agency and DDS. Second, the agency report is posted on the DDS website for use in consumer choice and self direction.

Levels of Licensure

Upon completion of the survey, the agency receives a separate license for residential/home supports and for day/employment supports. Levels of licensure are:

- Two Year License – agency receives “standard met” in at least 80% of the indicators including the 8 critical indicators.
- Two Year License with Mid-Cycle Review – agency receives “standard met” for 60-79% of the licensure indicators or has at least 60% “standard met” with corrected critical indicators.
- Deferred License – applies when an agency receives less than 80% for any critical indicator. The indicator(s) must be corrected before the agency is issued a license.
- Recommendation for Non-licensure – standard met for 59% or less of the indicators.

Levels of Certification

Upon completion of the survey, the agency receives a separate certification level for residential/home supports and for day/employment supports. Levels of certification are:

- Certified – agency receives “standard met” in at least 80% of the indicators including the 8 critical indicators.

- Certified with a Mid-Cycle Progress review – agency receives “standard met” for less than 80% of the certification indicators.

Additional Information

There are four regional Quality Enhancement Offices, each with survey teams coordinated and managed by a QE Director as follows:

Metro Boston

Raymond Edi-Osagie, QE Director Raymond.edi-osagie@MassMail.state.ma.us
465 Waverley Oaks Road, Suite 120
Waltham, MA. 02452
(781) 314-7580

Central/West

Brenda Cole, QE Director brenda.m.cole@MassMail.state.ma.us
140 High Street
Springfield, MA. 01105
413-205-0826

Northeast

Michelle Stomboly-Lorenzo, QE Director
michelle.stomboly-lorenzo@MassMail.state.ma.us
Hogan Regional Center
P.O. Box A
Hathorne, MA 01937
(978) 774-5000 x304

Southeast

Jennifer Petersen, QE Director Jennifer.petersen@MassMail.state.ma.us
151 Campanelli Dr., Suite B,
Middleboro, MA 02346
(508) 866-8837

Contact Doreet Goldhaber, Director of Licensure and Certification at (617) 624-7736.

Doreet.goldhaber@MassMail.state.ma.us or at:

Department of Developmental Services
500 Harrison Avenue
Boston, MA 02118-2439