

Realistic Job Preview

Introduction

It is important that you know both the challenges and rewards of direct support work prior to applying with the Arc of Warren. Please review the information within this Realistic Job Preview to better understand your role in supporting individuals with varying abilities and challenges, prior to making a decision to work with us.

What is a Direct Support Professional (DSP)?

As a DSP, you will spend most of your shift in direct contact with individuals who have a developmental and/or intellectual disability. Some may require only minor assistance; whereas others may need significant daily assistance with activities such as bathing, dressing and eating. A DSP helps teach our individuals to be as independent as they possibly can, all while working in a family-like environment within the community.

Requirements to be a DSP

- At least 18 years of age
- High School Diploma or GED
- Valid Driver's License & Acceptable Driving Record
- Acceptable Criminal Background Check & Drug Screening
- Basic Computer Skills
- Availability to work shifts that occur in the daytime, evening, overnight, early morning, weekends and holidays. We provide around the clock care for many of the individuals we serve, therefore we need staff who are willing to be flexible in their work schedules.

A Good DSP is a person who is

- Caring, Compassionate
- Honest, Loyal
- Accepting, Patient
- Flexible, Dependable
- Punctual, Reliable
- Shows Initiative and Creativity
- Hard Working, a Team Player
- Interested in Learning
- Good at Communicating
- Respectful, Courteous

What Direct Support Professionals Do

As a DSP, you will support people in their homes or at their jobs. We want the individuals we support to be a part of their community, so you may spend some of your work hours “out and about”. You could be involved in various community activities such as going to a movie, attending a sporting event or enjoying a picnic at the park. You also may be providing assistance with cooking meals, house chores, taking individuals to places of worship, doing laundry, teaching new skills, attending appointments, administering medication, and assisting with personal care such as bathing, dressing or eating. DSPs also provide a lot of documentation while on their shift and exhibit reading, writing, basic math and computer skills to process these documents. Your specific duties will vary, depending on your location, the individuals you support and the hours you work.

While there are plenty of responsibilities in direct support work, perks of the job include a sense of accomplishment, having fun, getting to know unique people and participating in new experiences. Many people find the work of providing direct support to individuals with disabilities to be a rewarding and enjoyable career.

There are other perks of being a DSP

- Medical/Dental Insurance Packages*
- Benefit Time Packages (Vacation, Sick, Personal)*
- 403b Retirement Savings Plan*
- Opportunities for Advancement
- Day, Evening, Overnight Positions

**depending on your position*

Training, Orientation and Support

The Arc of Warren provides you with both classroom-based and on the job training. All DSPs are carefully trained to perform their job duties by Arc of Warren trainers as well as their supervisors. Some of the trainings you receive will include, but are not limited to:

- Introduction to Developmental Disabilities
- CPR
- First Aid
- Medication Administration
- Consumer Care
- Preventing Bloodborne Pathogens (prevention of disease transmission)
- Preventing Abuse and Neglect
- Crisis Management

All new staff have questions. If you come to work for the Arc of Warren and you are unsure of something it is important to ask questions directly to your supervisor. The staff at the Arc of Warren work together in teams.

Challenging Behaviors and Behavior Support Plans

Some of the individuals who receive supports from the Arc of Warren may have challenging behaviors. We have a Behavioral Department which provides classroom-based training as well as training and support in the field. The Behavior Specialists work closely with DSPs to develop and implement plans designed specifically to help individuals with challenging behaviors learn positive alternative behaviors. DSPs will be responsible for following through on Behavior Support Plans, as well as collecting data, and are the most important staff in helping the individual with challenging behaviors be successful. Some challenging behaviors may include defiance, verbal aggression and/or physical aggression.

Medical Support

The Arc of Warren has a Nursing Department which provides classroom-based training as well as training and support in the field. We support many individuals who have physical disabilities and need assistance transferring to and from areas (e.g. wheelchair to bed). Although in most situations you will have equipment to assist you, it is important that you are able to lift 50 lbs. DSPs will be trained to give medications and to perform other care-related duties for the individuals whom we serve. DSPs will be responsible for:

- Administering Medication
- Attending Medical Appointments
- Providing Medical Supports (e.g. glucose testing, blood pressure monitoring, oxygen)
- Documenting Medical Supports
- Monitoring the General Health and Safety of Individuals

If you feel that you would be a good DSP, The Arc of Warren may be the place for you! There are many opportunities for paid training and for growth and promotion within the Agency. For many of our DSPs, the best thing about working here is the relationships which they build with the people whom we work with and support.

You have completed the Arc of Warren DSP Realistic Job Preview. We hope you are ready to join the Arc of Warren Team! If you think you would like a career in this field, there are currently openings throughout the county at our many locations. Why not take the next step and fill out our job application at www.arcwarren.org/careers?

If you have specific questions you would like answered, you can email your questions to mgasper@arcwarren.org or call (908) 689-7525 and ask for the HR Department.

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about The Arc of Warren County!