

Welcome to DSP+!

Welcome, we are thrilled to have you participate as an apprentice site in the DSP+ Apprenticeship Program. DSP+ is a registered apprenticeship program via the U.S. Department of Labor, the Kansas Department of Commerce (KansasWorks) and InterHab.

Registered Apprenticeship as Professionalization: Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, receive progressive wage increases, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential. Registered Apprenticeships are industry-vetted and approved and validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency. DSP+ is a program to assist in professionalization of the direct support career path through training, education, and advancement.

Staff Retention: Registered Apprenticeship is one of the most effective strategies for engaging employers and increasing performance outcomes for the public workforce system. Registered Apprenticeship helps workers get jobs, keep jobs, and increase their skills and earnings. Because it is a job, Registered Apprenticeship programs can help states and local areas meet their targets on the WIOA primary indicators. Apprenticeship continues to demonstrate strong growth, and according to the Department of Labor, Registered Apprenticeship completers have high retention rates – 91 percent of apprenticeship graduates retain employment.

Benefits to your organization: Participating in DSP+ provides a variety of benefits to your organization. Your organization is given funding to start your program, and additional funding is given for each apprentice enrolled in the program. These funds can assist with start-up costs for establishing an apprenticeship site, and training costs for each apprentice. As mentioned above, participating not only assists in professionalism of the direct support career, but is one of the most effective strategies in retaining employees through continuing education and on-the-job training. Apprentices will earn a portable, nationally-recognized credential within their industry from the Department of Labor. You can learn more about the tax incentives available for apprentice sites here: <https://ksapprenticeship.org/resource-page/kansas-apprenticeship-tax-and-grant-act/>.

Next Steps in DSP+

At this point, your organization has chosen to participate in DSP+, submitted the necessary forms, and now it's time to take the next steps!

Introducing Registered Apprenticeship to Your Organization: Registered Apprenticeship is new to the IDD industry. Most people are familiar with apprenticeships related to trade skills, such as electricians, plumbers, or even linemen, so a program like this is one of a kind. Sharing the information presented above can help explain the benefits to participating in the program and encourage staff to get involved. There should be one point of contact at your organization who will help execute the DSP+ program, answer questions, work directly with InterHab, and be a leader and direct contact for the apprentices. Now is the time to determine who this person will be; it may be training staff, a human resource employee, or another leader in your organization, it will be up to you to determine what works best.

Discussions with Supervisors: Supervisors within your organization are essential to a successful DSP+ apprentice. This person will assist in on-the-job mentoring, scheduling, and ensuring the candidate has the tools to be successful. When speaking with supervisors, it is important to lay out expectations for both the supervisor and the apprentice. This is the time to share with supervisors the entirety of what the program entails, sharing both the formal curriculum, and the on-the-job training. We have found that a level of flexibility is helpful when a DSP+ apprentice is working through the program, particularly as they are getting started! The supervisors can also work with the direct contact you have determined above to assist in answering questions as needed.

Discussions with Apprentice Candidates: Apprenticeship is not just another web-training - apprenticeships combine paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction to prepare workers for highly-skilled careers. This means that apprentice candidates need to be informed of the work required to be part of the program and set up for success. Having

conversations with apprentice candidates will help set structure and expectations prior to joining the program.

Establishing Your Selection Process: The selection process is up to you. For this program, we encourage you to select employees who are not brand new, which will aid in your success. Some organizations allow candidates to self-select, some have a committee decide, and others work directly with supervisors to decide who is best suited for the program.

Enrolling Apprentice Candidates: After you have chosen who will participate, InterHab will work individually to enroll each person in Kansas Works and RAPIDS, the two sites needed to officially place them into the program. These enrollments are done one-on-one and via Zoom. They take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Once complete, An automatically generated from the federal system, RAPIDS, will be sent to each apprentice candidate, who will sign the form electronically through DocuSign. Each apprentice is also sent a New Apprentice Welcome Document with basic information about the program and next steps.

Connecting to Related Technical Instruction (Wichita State University, Relias, OADSP): RTI training is a formal curriculum chosen by your employer and consists of courses that will help you develop skills and help you advance your knowledge as a DSP. Your organization will help you to enroll in these courses and track your progress.

Third Party Billing through Wichita State University: If your organization has chosen Wichita State University, you should use a third party billing form and work directly with wsu3rdparty@wichita.edu **PRIOR** to having your students enroll in badge courses. You should send the third-party billing form, along with a list of your apprentice candidates who will be enrolling in the badge program to ensure correct invoicing, see <https://www.wichita.edu/academics/wpce/Badges/thirdpartybilling.php> for more information. You will find an example third party billing letter on our resource page, which will help you simplify the process, and a new letter should be emailed every semester with updates. Then, your employees can enroll in the badge courses here: <https://www.wichita.edu/academics/wpce/Badges/>.

Setting up On-the-Job Training: OTJ training takes place at your organization and will help your apprentices develop the skills needed to continue to grow during their career as a DSP. There are seven different sections of training in this section, with differing hour requirements for each one. You will assist your apprentices in working toward your OTJ goals.

Workhands: Workhands (<https://app.workhands.com/sign-in>) is a tool that apprentices use to track their on-the-job hours and related technical instruction courses. Each apprentice will be sent a link to register for Workhands following their enrollment with InterHab. The lead staff person and/or supervisors will also have Workhands access to view and approve timecards, and track progress. Please see the attached document on how to utilize Workhands.

Resources: You can visit <https://interhab.org/dsp-information-page/> for more information. The main DSP+ website is located at <https://ksdspplus.com/>.

Questions?

Thank you so much for participating in the DSP+ Apprenticeship Program. Please do not hesitate to reach out to InterHab if you have questions or need additional assistance.

Matt Fletcher, 785-235-5103 ext. 1, mfletcher@interhab.org
Meghan Shreve, 785-235-5103 ext.3, mshreve@interhab.org