

**Arizona Direct Care Worker Competencies**  
Level I: Fundamentals of Direct Care (rev. January 2010)

**Level I: Fundamentals of Direct Care**

**Topic Areas**

- A. Roles and Responsibilities within the Agency and/or Community.
- B. Ethical and Legal Issues.
- C. Observing, Reporting and Documenting
- D. Communication and Cultural Competency.
- E. Job Management Skills and Self-Care
- F. Infection Control
- G. Safety and Emergencies
- H. Nutrition and Food preparation.
- I. Home Environment Maintenance.
- J. Body Mechanics and Techniques for Maintaining Back Safety.

**Skills\***

- Demonstrate proper hand washing technique.
- Demonstrate how to apply, remove and dispose of gloves.
- Describe or simulate the use of a fire extinguisher.
- Describe procedures for calling 911.
- Describe and/or role-play general procedures for common homemaking skills:
  - a. Washing dishes
  - b. Handling clothing and personal items
  - c. Doing laundry (including use of washer/dryer)
  - d. Making a bed
  - e. Cleaning floors, countertops, and appliances
  - f. Cleaning the bathroom
  - g. Disposing of trash
- Describe or role-play assistance with eating.
- Demonstrate effective communication techniques
- Describe and demonstrate good technique for moving objects with good body alignment.

**\* Family members providing personal care must demonstrate additional skills needed to perform those services.**

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**A. Roles and Responsibilities within the Agency and/or Community.**

1. List different settings where direct care and support services can be provided.
2. List different types of services that are offered to individuals and families in their home.
3. List different individuals who may receive services, such as homemaking, companion services, personal care or attendant care.
4. List Arizona agencies or programs that offer direct care services and require training for direct care workers.
5. Identify and describe activities of daily living (ADLs) and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
6. List members of the service team and their essential functions.
  - a. Family members, e.g. spouse, parent(s), children
  - b. Case manager / support coordinator.
  - c. Primary care physician.
  - d. Agency representative
  - e. Supervisor.
  - f. Others (therapists, teachers, psychologist etc.)
7. Describe the training requirements for Direct Care Workers (DCWs). Speak about:
  - a. Level I and level II competencies
  - b. Annual Continuing Education
8. Explain that job responsibilities for DCWs may vary from agency to agency.
9. Describe positive caregiver traits.
10. Identify behavior that shows high professional standards, for example, appearance and being on time.
11. Explain how professional standards influence the relationship between the DCW and the person receiving services.
12. Describe the role of the supervisor when there are questions about procedures.

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**B. Ethical and Legal Issues.**

1. Define legal terms that apply to direct care and support. Provide examples of what each term means in the direct care setting and the legal consequences of each.
  - a. Abuse, neglect and exploitation
  - b. Fraud
  - c. Assault and battery
  - d. Abandonment
  - e. Negligence
  - f. Liability
  - g. Invasion of privacy
  - h. False imprisonment, including improper restraint
2. Describe what “mandatory reporting” means, and how to report. Refer to statute/rule from Adult Protective Services (APS) and Child Protective Services (CPS).
3. Describe the role and purpose of service plans (care plan, support plan).
4. Explain how following a person’s service plan can assist in avoiding legal action.
5. Identify consumer rights, for example, the right to privacy.
6. Explain why privacy and confidentiality are important for individuals.
7. Define confidentiality and the legal responsibility of the direct care worker (DCW) to safeguard consumer information.
  - a. Explain what the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is and state the consequences of breaking this law (HIPAA).
  - b. Identify information that should be kept confidential.
  - c. Explain how to maintain confidentiality in conversations and on the telephone.
  - d. Explain what to do in the event of a breach of confidentiality.
  - e. Explain how direct care professionals can practice the “need to know rule”
8. Explain how not allowing a person to make decisions about services takes away from the person’s rights.
9. Explain how DCWs can promote an individual’s independence and the right to make personal choices.
10. Name and describe documents generally used for health care planning (advance directives):

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- a. Living Will.
- b. Durable Medical Power of Attorney
- c. Pre-hospital Medical Directives (Orange form / DNR = do not resuscitate)

11. Explain the phrase “Do not resuscitate.”

12. Explain what health events the orange form exclusively covers.

**C. Observing, Reporting and Documenting**

- 1. Explain the purpose of reporting and documenting
- 2. Describe how to record accurate information
- 3. Describe the difference between documenting and reporting facts vs. opinions or feelings
- 4. Explain the importance of documenting and reporting observed changes in individuals.

**D. Communication and Cultural Competency.**

- 1. Describe the communication process.
- 2. Explain the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication, and give examples of non-verbal communication.
- 3. Describe effective communication.
- 4. Describe barriers to effective communication and list examples, such as, making judgments about a person based on perceptions or poor listening habits.
- 5. Give examples of aggressive communication, passive communication and assertive communication, and explain the importance of assertive communication.
- 6. Give examples of respectful interactions, for example, respecting personal preferences, and avoiding unprofessional forms of address.
- 7. Identify and explain techniques for communicating with individuals with disabilities, including persons who
  - a. are blind or have low vision.
  - b. are deaf or hard of hearing.
  - c. have aphasia (difficulty with using language).
  - d. have a mental illness.

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- e. have a cognitive disability.
  - f. do not use spoken language to communicate.
8. Give examples of “Person First Language.”
  9. Explain the importance of responding in a non-threatening way to another person’s behavior.
  10. Give examples of problem-solving and conflict resolution techniques, such as active listening, open-ended questions and empathy.
  11. Define the term “culture,” and give examples of culture-specific concepts or practices.
  12. Explain the impact of culture on a person’s needs and preferences.
  13. Identify cultural barriers to communication, such as one’s own upbringing or perceptions.
  14. Define the term “Platinum Rule.”
  15. Define the term “cultural competence.”
  16. Describe actions that support culturally competent care.
  17. *Demonstrate effective communication techniques.*

**E. Job Management Skills and Self-Care**

1. Define the term stress and distinguish between positive and negative stress.
2. List causes and effects of unwanted stress.
3. Identify appropriate strategies for coping with stress and reducing work related stress
4. List ways to practice good time management, for example, by prioritizing tasks.
5. Identify strategies to improve organizational skills.
6. Explain why it is important to notify the agency / supervisor as soon as possible when you are unable to report to work as scheduled.
7. Define the term “boundaries” and give examples of personal and professional boundaries.
8. List rights of DCWs.
9. List personal safety tips for DCWs.

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**F. Infection Control.**

1. **Describe measures that promote prevention and control of infections.**
  - a. Give examples of how germs are spread
  - b. List ways to reduce the spread of infection
  - c. Identify the most effective method for reducing the spread of infection
  - d. Identify individuals who are at greater risk for getting infections
2. **Describe standard precautions (universal precautions).**
  - a. Define the term “standard precautions” (universal precautions) and state their purpose
  - b. Give examples of adherence to standard precautions (universal precautions).
  - c. List the appropriate times to wash one’s hands
  - d. *Demonstrate proper hand washing technique.*
  - e. Give examples of when gloves should be worn.
  - f. *Demonstrate how to apply, remove and dispose of gloves.*
3. **Describe the procedures for handling and disposing of sharps and other waste.**
  - a. Describe the handling, cleaning and/or disposal of soiled linen, incontinence pads, urine, mop water, and other waste
  - b. Describe the proper disposal of sharps.
  - c. State the appropriate dilution and use of a bleach solution.
4. **Describe common infectious diseases**
  - a. List the symptoms of Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C and discuss how these infections are transmitted
  - b. Identify benefits of Hepatitis B vaccinations and the recommended timeframes for administration
  - c. Discuss HIV, its symptoms and its transmission
  - d. Identify and discuss tuberculosis, its transmission, high risk individuals, and skin test screening.

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**G. Safety and Emergencies**

1. Identify common emergency situations
2. Explain general guidelines for emergencies, including when to call 911.
3. *Describe procedures for calling 911.*
4. List parts of an individual emergency plan.
5. Describe when to contact the family and/or the supervisor
6. Explain how to use the service plan to determine risk factors, safety precautions, and how to assist the person receiving services.
7. Describe fire safety techniques and fire risks.
8. *Describe and simulate (role-play) the use of a fire extinguisher.*
9. Identify potential hazards in the home, such as frayed cords and poisonous cleaning materials.
10. Identify risk factors for falls.
11. Describe ways to promote oxygen safety

**H. Nutrition and Food Preparation.**

1. Identify the food groups, nutrients and hydration needed for a healthy diet, for example, grains and fat.
2. Explain how good eating habits can increase good health
3. Identify why ingredients are listed on the food label, and what the order of the ingredients means.
4. Explain the terms “portion” and “serving.”
5. Describe how to plan a menu based on a person’s individual preferences and/or recommendations for a modified diet.
6. List 5 health issues a person could have that may require a certain diet
7. Identify nutrients that may have to be monitored for certain diets
8. Explain how to encourage a person to eat and/or comply with a medically recommended diet.
9. Identify assistive devices that could enable the person to be more independent and feel more in control of the meal planning and eating process.
10. Discuss proper food preparation and storage

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11. Define food borne illness and describe ways to reduce food borne illness
12. *Describe or role-play assistance with eating.*

**I. Home Environment Maintenance.**

1. Explain how to use the service plan to determine which cleaning tasks have to be completed and how
  - a. Identify who is responsible for cleaning of areas specific to the person serve
  - b. Identify who is responsible for cleaning of common areas
2. Explain the difference between personal choice and the need to complete necessary tasks to avoid health and safety risks
3. Identify proper cleaning solutions to use and proper concentration of these solutions.
4. Explain procedures for trash disposal and cleaning up clutter.
5. *Describe and/or role-play general procedures for common homemaking skills:*
  - a. Washing dishes
  - b. Handling clothing and personal items
  - c. Doing laundry (including use of washer/dryer)
  - d. Making a bed
  - e. Cleaning floors, countertops, and appliances
  - f. Cleaning the bathroom
  - g. Disposing of trash

**J. Body Mechanics and Techniques for Maintaining Back Safety.**

1. Explain the importance of good body mechanics and lifting techniques.
2. Describe elements of good body mechanics, such as proper use of leg muscles and keeping the center of gravity over the base of support.
3. *Describe and demonstrate good technique for moving objects with good body alignment (scenario).*
4. Identify assistive devices.

Note: Lifting refers only to lifting and moving items, such as boxes or furniture. Direct Care workers providing assistance with hands-on personal care or transfers of clients must complete Level II training and testing.