

**STATE STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL SERVICES:  
STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL GROUP CARE PROVIDERS**

**STAFF REQUIREMENTS**

**General:** Providers shall ensure that all staff, subcontractors, volunteers, interns, and other individuals under the authority of the provider who come into contact with referring state agency children are properly qualified, trained, and supervised. Providers must comply with and meet the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) licensing requirements Chapter 114 Statutory Authority: 1981 Code Sections 20-7-2250 and all applicable federal requirements.

**Required Documentation of Qualifications:** Providers will maintain and make available upon request appropriate records and documentation of such qualifications and investigations. If these records are kept in a central “corporate” office, the provider will be given a reasonable amount of time to retrieve the records for the agency that is requesting them.

In addition to documentation of training received by staff and documentation of staff credentials, the provider must keep the following specific documents on file:

- A copy of the individual’s resume or a completed employment application form; official college transcripts; and applicable licenses.
- A copy of the individual’s criminal record check form from an appropriate law enforcement agency. The criminal record check must be updated every two years.
- Verification from the child abuse registry that there are no findings of abuse or neglect against the individual. The child abuse registry verification must be updated annually.
- Verification from the state and national sex offender registries that there are no findings of sexual charges against the individual. This verification must be updated annually.
- If the employee’s position description requires that he/she transport children, a copy of the individual’s current driver’s license and official motor vehicle record (MVR). MVR checks must be updated every two years.

Providers shall ensure that all staff, subcontractors, volunteers, interns, or other individuals under the authority of the provider who come into contact with referring state agency children are properly qualified.

**Crisis On-Call:** The provider must coordinate and provide back-up for 24-hour, 7-day-a-week on-call crisis services for staff.

**Staff Development and Training:** Training is defined as organized, planned, and evaluated activities that are designed to achieve specific learning objectives. The following general training requirements apply:

- All providers must ensure that staff receives adequate orientation to the program.
- The content of the training must be directly related to the duties of the individual receiving the training.
- Instruction shall be carried out by individuals who are qualified to conduct such training.
- Documentation of training received and successfully completed shall be kept in the individual’s training record.
- Documentation of the training shall consist of an outline of the training provided and the trainer’s credentials.

All providers must ensure that all staff involved in the direct care of children/youth successfully completes a course in the prevention and management of aggressive behaviors. Annual refresher courses must also be provided.

All staff members will be made aware of the program’s written philosophy, rules, policies, procedures, modalities used and the expectations for everyone who is working with the children/youth. Each facility will describe in writing the program’s plan for staff orientation, which must include but not be limited to:

- The characteristics of individuals served
- Symptoms and behavioral signs of emotional disturbance
- Symptoms of drug overdose, alcohol intoxication, and possible medical emergency
- The program's emergency and evacuation procedures
- Procedures for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect
- Orientation in first aid and CPR
- Training in universal precautions and infection control procedures
- The program's policies regarding medication, runaway individuals, and behavior support.

No new staff member will be solely responsible for children in care until he/she has received the minimum orientation described above.

The facility must provide ongoing staff training programs appropriate to the size and nature of the program and staff involved. Each program will have a written plan for staff training, including the curriculum for behavior support training and refresher training as required by the program model. Providers must comply with and meet the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) licensing requirements.

**Human Services Professional (HSP):** Group Care Intensive Services (GCIS), Group Care Intermediate (GCMS), and Group Care Independent Living Services (GCILS) must be rendered by a Human Services Professional (HSP) or by staff under the supervision of the HSP. In addition to providing or supervising the service delivery, the HSP is responsible for continually assessing and evaluating the condition of the children receiving services.

Each provider of GCIS, GCMS, GCILS shall maintain a file for each HSP substantiating that the individual meets HSP qualifications. This shall include employer verification of the HSP education, licensure, and work experience.

Individuals wishing to be designated in one of the categories requiring a professional license must be licensed to practice in the state in which they are employed and must not exceed their licensed scope of practice under state law.

Individuals wishing to be designated as HSP must be able to document experience working with the population to be served. A "year of experience" is defined as paid and/or volunteer experience that is equivalent to 12 months of full time work experience. Practicum or internship placements as part of a degree program are acceptable as work experience.

The following professionals qualify as an HSP:

A **Psychologist** holds a doctoral degree in psychology from an accredited university or college, is licensed by the appropriate State Board of Examiners in the clinical, school, or counseling areas, and has a minimum of one year of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Registered Nurse** is a licensed registered nurse who has a bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college and a minimum of three years of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Mental Health Counselor** holds a doctoral or master's degree from an accredited university or college in a program that is primarily psychological in nature (e.g., Psychology, Counseling, Guidance, or social science equivalent) and has a minimum of one year of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Social Worker** holds a master's degree from an accredited university or college, is licensed by the State Board of Social Work Examiners, and has a minimum of one year of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Mental Health Professional Master's Equivalent** holds a master's degree in a closely related field that is applicable to the bio/psycho/social sciences or to treatment of the mentally ill; or is a Ph.D. candidate who has bypassed the master's degree but has sufficient hours to satisfy a master's degree requirement; or is a professional who is credentialed as a Licensed Professional Counselor and who has a minimum of one year of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Clinical Chaplain** holds a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited theological seminary, has one year of Clinical Pastoral Education that includes provision of supervised clinical services, and has a minimum of one year of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Child Service Professional** has a minimum of three years of experience working with the population that is to be served, and fulfills one of the following descriptions:

- Holds a bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college in psychology, social work, early childhood education, child development, or a related field including but not limited to criminal justice, rehabilitative counseling, or elementary or secondary education
- Holds a bachelor's degree in another field and has additional training (a minimum of 45 documented hours of training that could include undergraduate or graduate courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences on issues related to child development and children's mental health issues and treatment) in one or more of the above disciplines

A **Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker** holds a bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college, has been licensed by the State Board of Social Work Examiners, and has a minimum of three years of experience working with the population that is to be served.

A **Certified Addictions Counselor** holds a bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college, has been credentialed by the Certification Commission of the South Carolina Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors, the NAADAC (The Association for Addictions Professionals), or an International Certification Reciprocity Consortium/Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse approved certification board, and has a minimum of three years of experience working with the population to be served.