DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIALIST (DS) CERTIFICATION PROCESS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND REMINDERS

On March 3, 2025, the Early Intervention Developmental Specialist (DS) certification process transitioned from Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) to the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association's (OCCRRA) Ohio Professional Registry (OPR). The [Ohio Early Intervention Developmental Specialist webpage](#) contains information about the transition, including User Guides and informational webinar recording links. This document serves to address frequently asked questions that have been received in the first few months of this transition.

_____

DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIALIST APPLICATIONS
_____

Why can't I access the DS application?

For the DS application to open, the following must be in place in your OPR profile:

- Employment as a DS added to the "Employment" section.
- An official college transcript uploaded to the "Education" section that has been marked as "Verified" by the Registry team.
- A copy of your DODD-issued DS certification (if applicable) uploaded to the "Credential" section that has been marked as "Verified" by the Registry Team.

I need the 1 Year or 5 Year Renewal application. Why can I only access the Initial application?

Any DS Certification issued by DODD prior to March 3, 2025 should be uploaded in the "Credentials" section the OPR profile. The document must be verified by the Registry Team before you can open the renewal application. Additionally, the renewal application will not open until 90 days prior to the expiration date of your current DS certification.

My DS certification expires on XX-XX-XXXX. When can I apply for my renewal?

The renewal application will be available within 90 days of expiration **IF** your current DODD-issued DS certification (if applicable) is uploaded and verified in your OPR profile.

I am applying for my 5 Year Renewal DS certification. How do I prove that I worked 4,000 hours as a Developmental Specialist?

First, obtain a letter from your employer/supervisor, written on your agency's letterhead, verifying that you worked 4,000 hours in your role as a DS over the last five years. Next, upload this letter into the "Attachment" section of the 5 Year Renewal DS Application.

My current DS certification was issued prior to July 2021, so I am following Track I of DS certification. Why does the DS application show that I need to complete the Principles of Special Instruction (POSI) modules?

If your current and active DS or EI Supervisor certification was issued prior to July 2021, you will follow Track I to obtain your first 5 Year certification under this rule. You are not required to complete the POSI modules until your next DS certification renewal.

The Registry Team has a list of names of individuals who are following Track I of DS certification. If you are following Track I, you may submit your DS application in the OPR even if the POSI modules are marked "Incomplete".

_____

DEVELOPMENTAL SPECIALIST COURSEWORK/SEMINARS
_____

How do I know if any of my college coursework satisfies the six coursework content areas required for DS certification?

Send your college transcripts to Rhiannon.Monks@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov for review. For more information about the DS coursework content areas, click here.

Where do I upload proof of completion of DS coursework/seminars?

Proof of completion of DS coursework/seminars can be uploaded directly to the "Attachment" section in the DS application.

_____

TRAINING CERTIFICATES
_____

I uploaded my MyLearning transcripts and/or MyLearning certificates to my OPR profile's Professional Development section. Why were they not verified?

MyLearning training certificates are not accepted in the "Professional Development" section. If you have programmed your OPIN into your MyLearning profile (see the DS Application User Guide for instructions), your completed MyLearning courses should be transferred to your OPR profile within 48 hours. If they are not, there are a few options:

- If you are applying for your 1 Year DS certification, email Rhiannon.Monks@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov for MyLearning course verification.
- If you are applying for your 5 Year DS certification, you can upload your MyLearning transcript as a PDF directly into the DS application in the "Attachment" section.

What do I do with training certificates for courses taken outside of DODD MyLearning?

It is best to save your training certificates in a safe location on your computer until it is time to renew your 5 Year DS certification. When you open the 5 Year DS Renewal Application in the OPR, you can submit all of your training certificates as PDF uploads into the "Attachment" section of the application. It is acceptable to combine training certificates into one file.

Training certificates uploaded and verified in the Professional Development tab will also be accepted by the Registry team, but uploading training certificates to the "Attachment" section in the DS application expedites the Registry team's ability to review the training.

Note: This guidance has been updated since the DS Application Walkthrough webinar on 3/13/2025. This document represents the most up-to-date guidance for uploading training certificates.

_____

COLLEGE TRANSCRIPTS
_____

Why was my college transcript/diploma not verified in the OPR?

Official college transcripts must be uploaded to the "Education" section of your OPR profile for review. Diplomas are not accepted. Transcripts are considered "official" if they contain:

- A confer date.
- A seal/logo of the school.
- A visible registrar signature.

_____

IMPORTANT REMINDERS: MAINTENANCE OF DS CERTIFICATION

_____

Maintaining an active DS certification is essential to ensure compliance with state requirements. You must apply for your next DS certification **no fewer than 30 days** prior to the expiration date of your current DS certification. This 30-day window allows the Registry Team the time needed to process your application and request additional information, if needed.

Before applying for your DS certification in the OPR, you must create an OPR profile and upload the required information and documents. See the [DS Application User Guide](#) for instructions. **You should allow an ADDITIONAL 30 days to complete these steps**. We recommend setting up your OPR profile and uploading your required documents as soon as possible, regardless of the expiration date of your current DS certification.

If your current DS certification was issued by DODD, you can look up your expiration date in the [DODD Certification Database](#). If your current DS certification was issued in the OPR, you can find your expiration date in the "Credential" section of your OPR profile.

_____

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

_____

Questions regarding DS training and education requirements, MyLearning training courses, continuing professional development units, and DS certification rule can be directed to EI Specialist Anni Monks at Rhiannon.Monks@childrenandyouth.ohio.gov.

Questions regarding OPR functionality, application error messages, and application status can be directed to support@occrra.org.