



Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist

Apprentice Policies and Procedures

An apprentice is a student enrolled in the Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist program.

Class Description

ACDS is a four semester training opportunity for individuals employed in the field of early childhood. ACDS is designed to combine classroom instruction and work experience to enhance the quality of care provided for children and families in WV. The program is a collaboration between the Department of Labor (DOL) and River Valley Child Development Services (RVCDS). Each of the four semesters are 15 weeks in duration and class is one night a week for 2 ½ hours. The course fee is \$25.00 a semester and is due at orientation or the first night of class. Upon completion of the coursework, apprentices will receive an ACDS certificate verifying their participation and completion of the related instruction component. A certificate from the DOL will be issued to apprentices once they have completed between 3200 and 4000 of on the job training hours.

Eligibility

Individuals participating in the ACDS program must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- 18 years of age
- High school diploma or GED/TASC equivalency*
- Employed a minimum of 20 hours a week working directly with young children ages birth through twelve. Examples of such programs include: child care centers, family child care/facility, preschool, Head Start, public school, afterschool and home visitation
- Centers and family providers must be licensed through WV DHHR
- Family providers must have been a registered provider for at least three months prior to starting ACDS
- Family providers should consistently have an enrollment of four or more children

*ACDS will not accept educational documentation from a country outside of the United States unless it is accompanied by a statement of equivalency from a foreign credential evaluation organization. Individuals that have completed their high school education in private or home school environment must complete the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) and provide documentation prior to enrolling.

Registering for Class

To enroll for ACDS class, one should contact the local council representative in the county he or she wants to attend class. Some local council representative contact information can be found on the ACDS website, www.wvacds.org, by clicking on the contact information tab. If the local council representative contact information is unavailable then please call, 304-523-0433, or email the ACDS office, wvacds@rvcds.org, for assistance with registration.

First semester classes can begin in the fall and/or spring semesters. The decision to start a first semester class depends largely upon the number registered and on the availability of instructors in each county or county cluster. First semester classes should begin with a minimum of 12 apprentices. Subsequent semesters should continue with no less than eight students. Before classes with less than the required number of apprentices can occur, a request must be written and sent to the ACDS Statewide Coordinator for consideration.

Department of Labor

The Department of Labor is the partnering party in the ACDS program. The DOL and RVCDS have agreed to a set of Apprenticeship Standards that guide the policies and procedures of the program. The ACDS program serves as the statewide sponsor for all programs participating in ACDS.

When apprentices have completed the required number of OJT hours, they will need to submit completion documentation to the ACDS office. The required documentation includes:

- The completed Application For DOL
- A copy of the 4th semester ACDS certificate
- A copy of the supervisor evaluation for all four semesters
- A copy of any awarded previous experience credit hours

Once the documentation has been received by the ACDS office it will be reviewed, calculated and verified. Then the DOL will be notified of the apprentice's application for completion. The DOL will have the final approval of the applicant and will generate a completion certificate. Once the DOL sends the completion certificate to ACDS, a copy will be made and the original will be sent to the applicant or direct supervisor, depending on who originated the request.

WVIT I Completers

Beginning in fall 2018, completers of WVIT I may enter ACDS at second semester. To do so, the participant must provide a copy of his or her WVIT I completion certificate to ACDS and/or their second semester instructor. This certificate must be submitted no later than the first night of class. A copy of this certificate must also be placed in the apprentice's portfolio. WVIT I completers have 18 months from their date of completion to begin ACDS in second semester. After that time frame, they must start with semester one.

WV STARS

Registration with WV STARS is highly recommended but not mandatory for apprentices. All instructors are WV STARS Certified Instructors, and students that are on the WV STARS Career Pathway will receive 45 hours of credit at the end of each semester of ACDS.

Homework

Apprentices are assigned three assignments each week every semester. All assignments **MUST** be submitted to complete the semester. Assignments will not be accepted after week 14. Assignments will receive a one point deduction for each week they are late. Plagiarism or copying work from another student or source is **NOT** acceptable and may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

On the Job Training

Apprentices will keep record of their hours worked directly with children while in ACDS. Apprentices must have between 3200 and 4000 paid work hours to receive their DOL certificate. Volunteer hours do not count toward training hours. Each month apprentices will track the number of hours they work on an On-the-Job Training (OJT) log. Their supervisor/mentor must approve and sign the OJT log each month. Copies of the monthly OJT log should be kept by the apprentice, the supervisor/mentor and the instructor. Apprentices may continue to collect OJT hours after completion of the ACDS coursework. After classes are complete the apprentice and their supervisor/mentor will keep copies of the OJT logs until hours are completed.

Previous Experience Credit

Apprentices can receive credit for their work experience prior to beginning ACDS. To receive this credit an apprentice must complete a previous experience credit application and submit it along with the required documentation to the ACDS Statewide Coordinator. The accompanying documentation must reflect the hours for which the apprentice wants credit, such as timesheets or a W-2. Previous credit will be awarded in the following increments:

- 3 - 6 months experience will be awarded 200 credit hours
- 6 - 7 months experience will be awarded 400 credit hours
- 7 + - months experience and over will be awarded 800 credit hours

Individuals that wish to have military experience considered for previous credit experience must submit a DD-214 for verification. Apprentices awarded previous experience credit should place the award certificate issued by the ACDS Statewide Coordinator in their portfolio.

Attendance Policy

The attendance policy is based upon the mandatory instruction time outlined by the Department of Labor in the ACDS Apprenticeship Agreement Standards. Apprentices are required to have 144 hours of related instruction a year, or 72 hours a semester. Both direct classroom time and time allotted for homework are calculated into the required hours for each semester. Apprentices may miss three classes, but no more. Absences are neither excused, nor unexcused. Apprentices do not need to submit written excuses for absences. Late arrivals and early departures count toward an absence. Once an apprentice accumulates two and a half hours of missed class time, it is an absence. Penalties are assessed for absences after the first. The absence penalties are as follows:

- First absence – no penalty
- Second absence – 3% of total semester points
- Third absence – 5% of total semester points
- Fourth absence – dismissal from semester

Cancellation Policy

Classes may be canceled due to weather, emergency or instructor illness. If class must be canceled it is the responsibility of the instructor to notify the local council representative and the ACDS Statewide Coordinator. This should be done as soon as the instructor makes the determination to cancel and prior to contacting apprentices. The instructor must decide how to best reschedule the missed class. The following are options for rescheduling canceled classes:

- Adding 30 minutes to regular class time until the missed time is made up (4 classes if the entire class was canceled)
- Adding an additional week to the schedule

Two classes CANNOT be held in the same week. It is best if apprentices have input into how the class will be made up. If an instructor is not present at the scheduled start time, apprentices are informed to wait 20 minutes past the scheduled start time. After 20 minutes apprentices may leave and the class will need to be rescheduled by the instructor. Both the local council representative and the ACDS Statewide Coordinator must be informed by the instructor.

Reentry When Unemployed

If apprentices become unemployed during a semester they may finish their current semester. All homework assignments must be completed and the apprentice will not be eligible to accumulate On-the-Job Training (OJT) hours while unemployed. Apprentices must be reemployed before beginning the following semester. Apprentices that are not employed, or choose to sit out a semester have two years to reenter ACDS at the semester he or she last attended. After the two years, if an apprentice chooses to participate in ACDS again, he or she must start with first semester.

Grading Policy

Apprentices will be evaluated by their instructor on the basis of completion and quality of assignments, class attendance and quizzes. Assignments are due the week after they are assigned. Even if an apprentice is absent from class, his or her assignment must still be submitted to be considered on time. Assignments will receive a one point deduction for each week they are late. All homework assignments are required to be submitted prior to the end of the semester. Failure to submit a homework assignment will result in an incomplete and the apprentice will have to repeat the semester. Plagiarism or copying work from another student or source is NOT acceptable and may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

The grading system adopted by ACDS is:

- 100-94 (A)
- 93-86 (B)
- 85-80 (C)

To receive credit for a semester, apprentices must receive at least an 80% grade. Extra credit is available each semester at the discretion of the instructor. Extra credit may not exceed a total of 25 points.

Portfolio

Apprentices are required to develop and maintain an ACDS portfolio. The portfolio has specific requirements that are to be followed. Apprentices will begin the portfolio in first semester and will add documents to it each semester. The portfolio will be reviewed for accuracy at the end of each semester. Portfolios MUST be approved before an apprentice can continue to the subsequent semester. The required format and documents for a portfolio can be found on the ACDS website, www.wvacds.org. Failure to submit an approved portfolio will result in an incomplete and the apprentice will have to repeat the semester.

Supervisor/Mentor

Each apprentice will have a supervisor or mentor. This person is someone that oversees the apprentice's daily work and is responsible for signing OJT logs, maintaining apprentice documentation and completing evaluations each semester on the apprentice's work performance. For apprentices employed in child care centers and Head Start the supervisor is typically the director of the program. For public school employees, the principal most often serves as the supervisor. For family child care providers, center directors and center owners, ACDS may assign a mentor to act as a supervisor since these positions do not typically have an immediate supervisor. Mentors are contracted by ACDS and visit the apprentice monthly to provide support and sign any needed documentation, such as OJT logs. If you are an apprentice that will be in need of a mentor you need to make this known to your local council representative and instructor upon registering for class. They will then notify the ACDS office that a mentor will be needed. For additional information on mentors please visit the WV ACDS website at, www.wvacds.org, and click on the mentor link.

Supervisor/Mentor Evaluation

Each semester the apprentice's supervisor/mentor will complete an evaluation that reflects how the apprentice applied the knowledge gained in the classroom to his or her daily work with children. The apprentice is responsible for ensuring that this evaluation is completed by week 13 each semester. The apprentice, the supervisor/mentor and the instructor should each keep a copy of this evaluation. Apprentices should keep this document in their portfolio.

Apprentice Evaluation of Instructor

At the end of each semester apprentices will have the opportunity to evaluate their instructor. Apprentices are encouraged to complete this evaluation truthfully and fairly. Comments and suggestions are highly encouraged but should remain professional and constructive. The evaluation should be provided to apprentices by a third party, preferably someone from the local council. The instructor MUST step out of the classroom while the evaluations are being completed. The third party should collect the completed evaluations, place them in a sealed manila envelope and mail them to the ACDS Statewide Coordinator. The ACDS Statewide Coordinator will review each evaluation and provide the instructor a summary of the evaluations.

Instructor Site Visits of Apprentices

Instructors are required to complete a site visit for students during third semester. The site visit will allow the instructor the opportunity to observe how the apprentice applies the information taught through the ACDS Curriculum. The instructor will have specific standards he or she will look for, based upon the age group within the apprentice's work setting. The age groups are: Infant/Toddler, Preschool and School-age. The instructor will arrange a day and time to conduct the observation in advance. Instructors should visit at a time of day that the

children are awake and engaged in typical activity. Instructors should not conduct the observation during a field trip, nap or special event. After the instructor completes the evaluation he or she will discuss it with the apprentice. A copy of the completed evaluation should be kept by the apprentice, supervisor and instructor. The apprentice should maintain this document in his or her portfolio.

Graduation

Upon successful completion of the 4th semester of ACDS, students will have a graduation. All 15 weeks of the semester and all requirements MUST be completed prior to graduation. The graduation ceremony will be planned by the apprentices of the graduating class, with assistance from the instructor and local council. The graduating apprentices must come to a consensus on all aspects of the graduation including date, time and location.

Transcripts and Certificates

Apprentices may receive a transcript and replacement certificates from the ACDS office. Only transcripts that have the official ACDS seal will be recognized for articulation with community colleges throughout WV. Replacement transcripts and certificates are \$5.00 each. Checks are payable to River Valley Child Development Services.

Journeyperson

Once an apprentice has completed all coursework requirements, OJT hours and has received their DOL certificate he or she officially becomes a journeyperson. Journeypersons with an associate's degree are eligible to serve as ACDS mentors and are active on the local councils in their regions. ACDS sometimes offers special training opportunities exclusively for journeypersons. It is important for journeypersons to complete a journeyperson registration and submit it to the ACDS office. Doing so ensures that an individual is noted as being a journeyperson and is eligible to participate in any opportunities designed specifically for journeypersons.