DSP supervision log template

A record of each short supervision or coaching meeting between a frontline supervisor and a direct support professional: what you observed on shift, what is going well, one or two skills to practice, the support offered, the DSP's own words and an agreed next step with a date. Fill in the header and the focus list once; write a record after each meeting; keep the running record on its own page. Signatures, record keeping and anything beyond coaching follow your organization's HR policy.

Header: filled in once for each DSP

DSP	
Supervisor or coach	
Program or house	
Period this log covers	
How often you meet	
Your organization's focus list	

The focus list is your organization's own: copy it from your job description, evaluation or competency checklist. We leave it blank on purpose.

Supervision record 1

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	
Who met, and where	
What I observed on shift what I saw and heard; day and time	
What is going well one or two specific things	
One or two skills to practice from your list	
Support or training offered what I will do, and when	
In the DSP's own words in quotation marks	
Agreed next step, with a date who, by when	
Signatures and date as your HR policy says	

Supervision record 2

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	
Who met, and where	
What I observed on shift what I saw and heard; day and time	
What is going well one or two specific things	
One or two skills to practice from your list	
Support or training offered what I will do, and when	
In the DSP's own words in quotation marks	
Agreed next step, with a date who, by when	
Signatures and date as your HR policy says	

Supervision record 3

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	
Who met, and where	
What I observed on shift what I saw and heard; day and time	
What is going well one or two specific things	
One or two skills to practice from your list	
Support or training offered what I will do, and when	
In the DSP's own words in quotation marks	
Agreed next step, with a date who, by when	
Signatures and date as your HR policy says	

Supervision record 4

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	
Who met, and where	
What I observed on shift what I saw and heard; day and time	
What is going well one or two specific things	
One or two skills to practice from your list	
Support or training offered what I will do, and when	
In the DSP's own words in quotation marks	
Agreed next step, with a date who, by when	
Signatures and date as your HR policy says	

Supervision record 5

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	
Who met, and where	
What I observed on shift what I saw and heard; day and time	
What is going well one or two specific things	
One or two skills to practice from your list	
Support or training offered what I will do, and when	
In the DSP's own words in quotation marks	
Agreed next step, with a date who, by when	
Signatures and date as your HR policy says	

The one-page running record

One row for each meeting. Read it before each meeting; bring it to the evaluation if your policy says so. Write the date the step was done in the last column, or what got in the way.

Date	Skill we are practicing	Support offered	Agreed next step	Due	Done on

Where this comes from: National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013. The frontline supervisor's area 7 includes "scheduling and maintaining training records." The columns are ours.

FOR SUPERVISORS AND THE PEOPLE WHO TEACH THEM

How to run a 20-minute supervision meeting

Each step names its source; the agenda, minutes, example pairs and worked example are ours.

Before: 5 minutes	**Get ready.** Read the last record and the running record. Write down what you observed on shift since: two or three things you saw and heard, at least one that went well. Choose the one or two skills to talk about. (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal; ICI Frontline Initiative, 2004)
Minutes 0 to 3	**Open and look back.** Ask how the shift is going. Read last time's agreed step aloud and ask how it went. Mark it done, or note what got in the way. (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
Minutes 3 to 8	**What is going well.** Say what you saw and heard that went well, with the day and time. Ask the DSP what they are proud of. The Boggs form asks supervisors for comments that "reinforce successful use of best practices." (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
Minutes 8 to 14	**One or two skills.** Describe what you saw, in observed behavior. Ask what the DSP saw. Practice or model it together for two minutes: say it, show it, try it. (National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013; CMS DSW Core Competencies, 2014)
Minutes 14 to 18	**Support and next step.** Ask what would help. Offer the support. Agree one next step, who does it, and the date. Write it as the DSP says it. (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal; National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013)
Minutes 18 to 20	**Their words, and close.** Ask: "What do you want to add?" Write it in their words. Set the next meeting date. Both sign, as your policy says. (CMS DSW Core Competencies, 2014; ICI Frontline Initiative, 2004)

Who does what

The DSP: brings their view	Says what is going well and what is hard, in their words, helps choose the next step, and does it by the date. Signs as your policy says. (CMS DSW Core Competencies, 2014; Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
The supervisor: prepares, observes and offers support	Writes what they saw and heard, picks one or two skills from the organization's list, offers coaching or training, and keeps the running record. FLS area 7 covers coaching, feedback and training records. (National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013)
The organization: decides what is expected	Sets the focus list, how often to meet, where records are kept and who may read them, and follows its own HR policy for anything beyond coaching. We leave those lines blank.

Seven rules for writing the record

1. **Write what you saw and heard, not what you think.** ICI describes objective documentation as "just the facts," and says that if you include an opinion, "always indicate that this is your opinion." The Boggs appraisal asks the supervisor to rate "based on their observations." (ICI Frontline Initiative, 2004; Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
2. **Start with what is going well.** The Boggs appraisal strongly encourages supervisors "to include comments that reinforce successful use of best practices and to note areas where improvement and growth are needed." Say what the DSP did, and when. (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
3. **Keep to one or two skills.** Our line. A short list is one the DSP can practice before the next meeting. Choose from your organization's own list. The Boggs appraisal notes that average scores can be calculated "to identify where there may be the most need for further professional development"; this log uses no scores. (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
4. **Offer support, not only a goal.** FLS competency 5.G: "Teach, model, and coach DSPs in the most effective approaches to achieve the direct support competencies." Write what you will do, such as show it, practice it, or pair them with a co-worker. (National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013)
5. **Put the DSP's words in quotation marks.** The CMS core competencies include "Seeks feedback from many sources and uses to improve work performance and skills," and FLS 7.F asks supervisors to "Observe and solicit feedback from DSPs." The DSP's own words are some of that feedback. (CMS DSW Core Competencies, 2014; National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013)
6. **Agree the next step together, with a date.** The Boggs form lists strategies "arrived at through collaborative conversation during the supervision meeting." A step with a name and a date can be checked at the next meeting. (Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal)
7. **Describe people with dignity.** The NADSP Code of Ethics asks DSPs to "Use respectful and inclusive language that reflects each person's preferences." The same care applies to how a supervisor writes about a DSP: what they did, not what they are. (NADSP Code of Ethics)

What you saw, not what you think: eight examples

Made up for teaching; the names are invented.

Part of the record	Instead of	Write
Going well	*Great with the residents.*	At dinner on Monday, March 1, Priya asked, “Do you want the blue plate or the green one?” and waited about ten seconds before the person pointed to the blue one.
Going well	*Gets along with everyone.*	At 4:15 PM on Tuesday, March 2, Priya greeted each person by name at the door, and sat next to K. when K. asked her to.
Observed	*Marcus has a bad attitude.*	At 3:10 PM on Tuesday, March 2, Marcus stayed at the kitchen table while D. asked twice for help with a coat. He said, “I’m finishing the medication count.”
Observed	*Poor communication.*	At the 3:00 PM shift change on Thursday, March 4, the report said “J. ate fine.” It did not say that J. asked to call her sister at 4:00 PM.
Skill to practice	*Needs to work on documentation.*	Finish each person’s daily note before leaving the shift. Three of five notes last week were entered the next morning: February 22, 24 and 25.
Support offered	*Will retrain.*	I will go through the shift change report with Marcus for 15 minutes at the start of his next two shifts, March 3 and March 4, 9:00 AM.
DSP’s words	*Marcus was defensive.*	Marcus said, “Nobody told me the outing time changed.” He asked how changes get to him.
Next step	*Improve by next time.*	By Friday, March 12, Priya will lead the 7:00 AM routine while I watch, and we will meet for 20 minutes at 2:00 PM that day.

A worked example: three records and the running record

Made up for teaching: three supervision records for one invented DSP, Priya N., at an invented group home, over four weeks. The people supported are shown by initials. Priya works 12:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Priya's organization's focus list, as the example supposes, includes writing daily notes before leaving the shift, offering choices, and the shift change report.

Header: Priya N., Maple Street home. Supervisor: A. Reyes. Period: March 1 to April 16, 2027. We meet about every two weeks.

Worked example, supervision record 1

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	Tuesday, March 2, 2027, 2:00 PM to 2:20 PM
Who met, and where	Priya N. (DSP) and A. Reyes (supervisor), in the office.
What I observed on shift	At dinner on Monday, March 1, I saw Priya ask, "Do you want the blue plate or the green one?" and wait about ten seconds. Three of the five daily notes for February 22 to 26 were entered the next morning: February 22, 24 and 25.
What is going well	Offering a choice and waiting at dinner. K. pointed to the blue plate and ate with the group.
One or two skills to practice	Finish each person's daily note before leaving the shift.
Support or training offered	I will sit with Priya for 10 minutes at 6:30 PM on Thursday and Friday while she writes one note, so she can ask questions.
In the DSP's own words	"Late in the shift is when everyone needs me. I run out of time." "Can I start the notes at 6:30?"
Agreed next step, with a date	Priya starts notes at 6:30 PM for the next two weeks. Check on March 16.
Signatures and date	A. Reyes and Priya N., March 2, 2027

Worked example, supervision record 2

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	Tuesday, March 16, 2027, 2:00 PM to 2:18 PM
Who met, and where	Priya N. (DSP) and A. Reyes (supervisor), in the office.
What I observed on shift	I looked at the notes for March 8 to 12: all five were in before the end of her shift at 8:00 PM. On March 11 I watched the outing at the bus stop: Priya asked R., "Which seat do you want?" and then said, "I'll sit here when you are ready."
What is going well	Notes on time all week. Choice and waiting again, at the bus stop.
One or two skills to practice	The shift change report: include what each person asked for or said that the next shift needs.
Support or training offered	I will go through one report with Priya on Wednesday, March 17, at 2:00 PM. She will read two examples from our shift change report template.
In the DSP's own words	"Starting at 6:30 helped." "I do not always know what the next shift needs to hear."
Agreed next step, with a date	Priya adds one line to each person's report about what they asked for. Check on March 30.
Signatures and date	A. Reyes and Priya N., March 16, 2027

Worked example, supervision record 3

Date and time (year, AM or PM)	Tuesday, March 30, 2027, 2:00 PM to 2:21 PM
Who met, and where	Priya N. (DSP) and A. Reyes (supervisor), in the office.
What I observed on shift	Reports for March 22 to 26: four of five included a line about what a person asked for. On March 24 the report said, “R. asked to call his brother at 4:00 PM.” On March 25 at dinner I saw Priya offer R. two choices for the evening routine: “Walk first or music first?”
What is going well	The report line is in four of five reports, and the March 24 line gave the next shift something to act on.
One or two skills to practice	Offering a choice with two or more options for the evening routine (continuing from March 2).
Support or training offered	I will pair Priya with T. for the 7:00 PM routine on April 6 so she can see how T. offers choices, then we talk for 5 minutes.
In the DSP’s own words	“I forgot on Friday.” “I want to see how T. does it.”
Agreed next step, with a date	Priya shadows T. on April 6 and brings one thing she noticed to our next meeting on April 13.
Signatures and date	A. Reyes and Priya N., March 30, 2027

The same meetings on the running record

Date	Skill we are practicing	Support offered	Agreed next step	Due	Done on
Mar 2	Daily notes finished before leaving	Sat with Priya at 6:30 PM, Mar 4 and 5	Start notes at 6:30 PM for two weeks	Mar 16	Mar 16
Mar 16	Shift change report: what each person asked for	Went through one report Mar 17, 2:00 PM	Add one line per person to the report	Mar 30	Mar 30
Mar 30	Offering choices (evening routine)	Shadow T., Apr 6, 7:00 PM	Bring one thing noticed to Apr 13	Apr 13	

Before you file a record: a ten-point check

☐ The date has the year, and the times have AM or PM.

☐ What I observed says what I saw and heard, with the day and time.

☐ At least one thing that is going well is written, with what the DSP did.

☐ One or two skills, not a list.

☐ The support offered says what I will do, and when.

☐ The DSP’s own words are in quotation marks.

☐ The next step has a name and a date.

☐ People supported are shown as your policy says.

☐ We both signed, as the HR policy says, and the next meeting is set.

☐ The running record has a new row, and last time’s step is marked.

The wording is ours, built on the sources named in the rules.

For training leads: set it up and teach it in five steps

1. **Fill in the header and the focus list.** Copy the skills and expectations from your organization’s own job description, evaluation or competency checklist into the focus list, and write how often you meet. We leave both blank on purpose: they are your organization’s decisions.
2. **Block 20 minutes on the calendar.** A standing time that is kept is worth more than a long meeting that moves. Ask the supervisor to read the last record first.
3. **Teach the seven rules with the eight example pairs.** Have supervisors rewrite each “instead of” line as what a camera could record before showing the “write” line.
4. **Run the first meeting from the worked example.** Read the three records aloud, then hold a practice meeting with two supervisors playing the parts.
5. **Keep the running record, and carry it to the evaluation.** File each record where your policy says. If your organization’s policy says so, bring the running record to the performance evaluation as one input; the skills you see can inform the competency checklist and your training plan.

Where each part comes from

Read November 15, 2026. The field prompts, the rules' wording, the agenda, the examples and the worked example are Special Learning's; the quoted lines are as published. None of these organizations has reviewed or endorsed this log. The fillable Word version is at the web address at the foot of each page.

1. **National Frontline Supervisor Competencies, 2013.** Lori Sedlezky, Jennifer Reinke, Sheryl Larson and Amy Hewitt, National Frontline Supervisor Competencies (April 2013), Research and Training Center on Community Living, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota (competency area 7, Staff supervision, training, and development, and area 5, Promoting professional relations and teamwork), as posted by ANCOR. https://www.ancor.org/sites/default/files/national_frontline_supervisor_comp.pdf
2. **ICI product page, National Frontline Supervisor Competencies.** Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, product page for National Frontline Supervisor Competencies (April 2013): a nationally validated set of 11 competency areas for frontline supervisors in the direct support workforce. https://ici.umn.edu/products/553
3. **Rutgers Boggs Center (New Jersey), DSP appraisal.** Rutgers Boggs Center, in partnership with the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, Direct Support Professional Competency Based Performance Appraisal (an optional tool for frontline supervisors; the English form is a PDF on the same page). https://boggscenter.rwjms.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/direct-support-professional-competency-based-performance-appraisal
4. **NADSP Competency Areas.** National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), The NADSP Competency Areas (fifteen areas, each with skill statements), as published on nadsp.org. https://nadsp.org/resources/competency-areas/
5. **NADSP Code of Ethics.** National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), The NADSP Code of Ethics (revised 2026), tenets as published on nadsp.org. https://nadsp.org/resources/the-nadsp-code-of-ethics/
6. **CMS DSW Core Competencies, 2014.** Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, National Direct Service Workforce Resource Center, Direct Service Workforce Core Competencies, Final Competency Set, December 2014. https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2019-12/dsw-core-competencies-final-set-2014.pdf
7. **ICI Frontline Initiative, 2006.** Nancy McCulloh, "Training Frontline Supervisors Improve Recruitment and Retention of DSPs," Frontline Initiative, Volume 7, Number 1 (2006), Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. https://publications.ici.umn.edu/frontline-initiative/7-1/training-frontline-supervisors-improve-recruitment-and-retention-of-dsps
8. **ICI Frontline Initiative, 2004.** Traci LaLiberte, "Doing Documentation 'Write!'," Frontline Initiative, Volume 5, Number 4 (2004), Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. https://publications.ici.umn.edu/frontline-initiative/5-4/doing-documentation-write
9. **TennCare Workforce Initiative, DSP and FLS competency sets.** TennCare Workforce Initiative, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, DSP & FLS Competency Sets (the page describes how competency sets are used in recruitment, selection, retention, setting performance expectations, providing feedback and training). https://tenncare.ici.umn.edu/dsp-workforce-toolkit/retention/understanding-and-using-dsp-and-fls-core-competency-sets
10. **NADSP Frontline Supervisor curriculum page.** National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP), Frontline Supervisor Train-The-Trainer Curriculum, a page that names the 15 NADSP competency areas and the 11 nationally validated Frontline Supervisor competencies (this page paraphrases it and quotes nothing from it). https://nadsp.org/frontline-supervisor-curriculum/

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