



OP-ENS Newsletter

Our Peers – Empowerment and Navigational Supports

Personal Care Assistant Services

Welcome to your second OP-ENS Newsletter. This month's newsletter is full of useful information about personal care assistant services here in Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services (IDHS/DRS) provides Personal Assistants (PA) and Homemaker Services through the Home Services Program.

PAs help with personal care, household tasks, and with permission of a doctor, some healthcare procedures. PAs are hired, employed, and when necessary fired by individual customers.

Homemaker services are personal care provided by trained and professionally supervised personnel for customers who are unable to direct PA services.

Personal assistants can help with



www.living-with-attendant-care.info

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Program for Healthcare Justice for People with Disabilities

Navigating Personal Care Assistant Services

Who can receive services?

- People with disabilities
- Under age 60
- Medicaid eligible
- Need help with daily living activities in their homes.

Apply for services

Call (800) 843-6154, or apply online:

<https://wr.dhs.illinois.gov/wrpublic/wr/dynamic/referral.jsf>

IDHS Home Service Program staff will:

- Visit you at home.
- Complete application and eligibility assessment.
- Get releases for medical information.
- Get a copy of your State of Illinois Photo ID or valid Driver's License.
- Develop a service plan.
- Help you find service providers.
- Provide resources and information on your right to appeal if eligibility is not met.

Hiring a personal assistant

- Does your PA have a valid Social Security number? This will need to be verified on the I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification form.
- Does your PA have access to transportation?
- Review your Service Plan and ask specific questions about their ability to give you the support you need.
- Ask if the person has any other jobs. You want to make sure the other job will not interfere with the hours you need services.
- Remember, the PA works for you so make sure you're comfortable with them.

Helpful Hiring Hints

Get to know the applicant - you'll be spending a lot of time together during the employment relationship.



Ask for names and phone numbers of people who can confirm the applicant's ability and trustworthiness. Call the references to get their opinions of the applicant.

Firing a personal assistant

- Use neutral language ("it wasn't a good fit")
- Avoid blaming language
- If needed, give concrete examples of problems
- Have a friend or family member with you if possible.
- Have another PA hired who understands your needs before you fire your PA.

Verifying PA hours

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV): PAs need to clock in and out of work each day using your phone.

Don't have a phone? Get a Fixed Visit Verification Device from IDHS.



EVV Helpline
(888) 843-5139

For more information

Illinois Department of Human Services Family Community Resource Center

(800) 843-6154

www.dhs.state.il.us

Access Living PA Program
www.accessliving.org/personal-assistant-program

(312) 640-2193

Progress Center for Independent Living

<http://progresscil.org/services-and-advocacy/>

(708) 209-1500