

Consumer Guidebook for Self-Directed Services

Providing you with the basic information you need to manage your own self-directed services.



Developed by the Office of Long-Term Living under the
Pennsylvania Departments of Aging and Public Welfare



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Chapter 1: Introduction to Self-Directed Services

You are the expert on your needs and how to address them.

- 1.1 What is the Consumer-Employer Model?
- 1.2 What is the Services My Way Model?
- 1.3 What is the Agency Model?
- 1.4 Am I Eligible for self-directed services?
- 1.5 What are the benefits of self-directed services?
- 1.6 Why should I choose the Services My Way option if I'm already directing my own personal assistance services?
- 1.7 Can I have a combination of Services My Way and Consumer Employer or Agency model services?
- 1.8 What are some examples of goods and services I can purchase under the Services My Way model?
- 1.9 What are some examples of goods and services I cannot purchase under the Services My Way model?
- 1.10 What if my Service Coordinator does not agree on what I feel I need on my Spending Plan?
- 1.11 What are my rights to appeal and dispute my Individual Service Plan or Individual Budget?
- 1.12 What will happen if I run out of money before the end of the year?
- 1.13 What if my direct care worker does not report to work?
- 1.14 Does my Individual Budget roll over to the next fiscal year?
- 1.15 Can I use Agency model services in an emergency if my back-up worker is not available?
- 1.16 What if I don't want to continue with the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way model?
- 1.17 Who should I go to with additional questions?

Pennsylvania has a rich history of offering “self-directed services” under our home and community based programs. You know best about your own needs and how to address them. Self-directed services let you take more control of your services and give you the power to manage your own services and support service worker.

Pennsylvania’s self-directed services are offered via two service models that allow you varying degrees of control based on your needs and preferences. The two models are Consumer-Employer (CE) and Services My Way (SMW).

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This guidebook has been designed to provide you with the basic information you need to manage your own self-directed services. In addition, the guidebook will point out

ICON KEY
Valuable information
Sample Tool
Make it Yours!

some additional resources that are available to you. As you find additional information and resources, write them down in your guidebook and share them with your coordinator and other participants. The more experience you have, the better you will become at managing your own services.

1.1 What is the Consumer-Employer Model?

The Consumer-Employer model is a service model designed to give you control over your workers. In the Consumer-Employer model, you are the employer of your support service workers. You may hire a friend, neighbor, or other trusted individual to be your worker.



As the employer, you are responsible for:

- Recruiting and hiring your worker;
- Training your worker;
- Determining your worker's job duties and schedule;
- Supervising your worker;
- Reviewing your worker's performance; and
- Firing your worker when necessary

1.2 What is the Services My Way Model?

Services My Way is a service model designed to give you control over your services. Services My Way allows you to design your own Spending Plan in order to purchase goods and services related to a need identified in your Individual Service Plan (ISP). In Services My Way you get to choose the goods and services you need based on your Individual Budget. You will develop your own flexible Spending Plan to purchase the goods and services that will assist you in meeting your needs and goals.

In Services My Way, you are the employer of your direct care worker. You may hire a friend, neighbor or other trusted individual to be your worker. You decide how much to pay your employees based upon your Individual Budget.

You may include goods and services in your Spending Plan that are not typically available through the Aging or Attendant Care waiver but are supportive of your Individual Service Plan.

Services My Way is not a new service. It's a different way of delivering services that gives you more choices.

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1.3 What is the Agency Model?

The Agency Model of service is available for participants that do not wish to self-direct their services. In the agency model, you would select a provider from an approved list of agencies to provide your services. The provider that you select recruits, hires, and manages your support service workers.

1.4 Am I Eligible for self-directed services?

To use self-directed services, you need to be:

- Willing to participate and interested in self-direction
- Willing to accept risks, rights and responsibilities of self-direction
- Willing to accept the responsibilities as an employer

In addition, to be eligible for Services My Way, you need to live in a participating county. Your service coordinator can give you a list of participating Services My Way counties.

1.5 What are the benefits of self-directed services?

Self-directed services offer you more control of your services and workers. Self-directed services allow you to lead your service planning process; determine how and when your services are delivered; and recruit, hire, and manage your support service workers.

There are pros and cons to all models of service, and you should choose a model that best meets your needs and goals. Your service coordinator can provide additional information and guidance regarding the various models. Ultimately, selecting a model of service is a personal decision that is up to you.

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up to you.*

1.6 Why should I choose the Services My Way option if I'm already directing my own personal assistance services?

With Services My Way you get more choices than in any other service model. You will participate in developing your Individual Budget and a Service Coordinator will help you achieve your goals. You will design your Spending Plan for what you need to continue living in your own home. You decide what to pay your workers and when to give them a raise. You can buy the things you need that aren't offered through other service models.

1.7 Can I have a combination of Self-Direction and Agency model services?

Yes. For example, if you normally use a direct care worker from an agency on the weekend and your own direct care worker during the week, this arrangement could continue.

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1.8 *What are some examples of goods and services I can purchase under the Services My Way model?*

- Employment of support service workers, including family members, to provide personal assistance;
- Help with cleaning , laundry, meal preparation, and other household chores;
- Assistance with personal care like bathing, hair washing, bladder and bowel care, and care of your teeth;
- Purchase of services from home care providers or temporary help agencies;
- Chores services, including outside chores that provide for a safe environment and access in and out of the home;
- Home modifications and/or equipment not currently paid for by other program resources;
- Supplies and equipment that promote or enhance independence that are not currently paid for by the other program resources;
- Repairs to adaptive equipment;
- Savings for your back-up plan;
- Savings for a special purchase which you cannot afford to make from one monthly budget; and
- Services or purchases which support your ability to live as independently as possible and avoid the need for admission to a long-term care facility.

1.9 *What are some examples of goods and services I cannot purchase under the Services My Way model?*

- Services covered by the State Plan, Medicare, other third-parties, including education, home-based schooling, and vocational services;
- Services, goods, or supports provided to or benefiting persons other than you;
- Personal items and services not related to your disability;
- Experimental treatments;
- Vehicle maintenance (unless the maintenance is to modifications related to the disability)
- Vacation expenses;
- Gifts for workers, family or friends;
- Loans to your workers;
- Rent or mortgage payments;
- Payments to someone to be your representative;
- Clothing;
- Groceries (with the exception of special foods required to maintain nutritional status);
- Lottery tickets;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Entertainment activities;

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- Televisions, stereos, radios, or VCRs;
- Utility payments (electric, gas, sewer, garbage services);
- Tobacco products;
- Pets and their related costs; (with the exception of training and certified service animals and their related costs); and
- Home delivered meals.

1.10 What if my Service Coordinator does not agree on what I feel I need on my Spending Plan?

Services My Way is a self-directed program which means you have the power to exercise decision making authority over some or all of your waiver services and accepting the responsibility for taking a direct role in managing them. The role of the Service Coordinator is to provide guidance throughout this process.

-  Goods and services are appropriate purchases when they are reasonably necessary to meet at least one of the following outcomes:
 - Maintain your ability to remain in the community;
 - Enhance your community inclusion and family involvement;
 - Develop or maintain your personal, social, physical, or work-related skills;
 - Decrease your dependency on formal support services and lead to a reduction of the number of units of service or costs in your service plan;
 - Increase your independence; or
 - Increase the ability of your unpaid family members and friends to receive training and education needed to provide support.

1.11 What are my rights to appeal and dispute my Individual Service Plan or Individual Budget?

Regardless of the model you choose, you have the opportunity to request a fair hearing and appeal when your request for an adjustment to your Individual Service Plan or Individual Budget is denied or the amount of the Individual Service Plan or Individual Budget is decreased. You have the same rights to a fair hearing and appeal as originally set forth in the waiver or program in which you participate.

1.12 What will happen if I run out of money before the end of the year?

Your Spending Plan is allocated on a monthly basis. This allows for your money to last throughout the year. Your Fiscal/Employer Agent and Service Coordinator will assist in monitoring your Spending Plan. Your Fiscal/Employer Agent will provide you with written financial reports on a monthly and quarterly basis and as requested by you, the Service Coordinator or the Office of Long-Term Living. Your Service Coordinator will

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track under spending and over spending and contact you to resolve potential service delivery problems.

1.13 What if my direct care worker does not report to work?

You will need to have a back-up plan.

- The use of family, friends, and neighbors is encouraged and usually available on short notice.
- A Back-up Support Service Worker Designation form describing your arrangement of back-up services will be completed when you enroll in the Services My Way model and be maintained with your individual service plan.
- In the event that your back-up plan fails, your Service Coordinator will be responsible to coordinate immediate, non-routine basic services to you until your regular support service worker or back-up worker returns.
- The back-up plan will be responsive to your needs and goals as specified in your individual service plan.



My Back-up Plan includes:

1.14 Does my Individual Budget roll over to the next fiscal year?

No, your savings must be spent within the state fiscal year which starts on July 1st and ends on June 30th of each year.

1.15 Can I use Agency model services in an emergency if my back-up worker is not available?

Yes, if your back-up plan fails, you can use an agency model attendant to provide back-up coverage. Service providers may provide emergency back-up coverage in order to meet your immediate needs in a timely manner as well as to ensure your health and welfare. The Service Coordinator is responsible for confirming that your strategies and back-up plans are working and are still current. In order to ensure your health and

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safety it is recommended that you contact your Service Coordinator to report any disruptions of back-up plans or strategies.

1.16 What if I don't want to continue with the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way model?

You may discontinue participation in the either service model at any time and choose another model of service without an interruption in services. If you decide to return to the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way model, you may contact your Service Coordinator to discuss re-enrollment.

1.17 Who should I go to with additional questions?

Any additional questions concerning wages paid on your behalf and all that is required of you for requirements of local, state, and federal withholdings may be forwarded to your Fiscal Employer Agency. All other questions pertaining to your services should be referred to your Service Coordinator.

 Key Contacts:
My Service Coordinator is:
Name
Agency
Address
Phone
Email
My Fiscal/Employer Agency is:
Name
Agency
Address
Phone
Email

Chapter 2: Getting Started

Starting self-directed services is easy

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| 2.1 | Where do I begin? | 2.5 | Will I Still Have a Service Coordinator? |
| 2.2 | Can I have a Representative who speaks for me? | 2.6 | What is a Fiscal/Employer Agent? |
| 2.3 | What are my Rights? | 2.7 | What if I have a Complaint? |
| 2.4 | What are my Responsibilities? | 2.8 | What is the Appeal Process? |

Starting self-directed services is easy and only takes a quick phone call to your Service Coordinator to begin the process.

2.1 Where do I begin?

- You can contact your Service Coordinator and let them know you are interested in either the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way model. Your Service Coordinator will meet with you, your family and/or your advocates.
- In addition, you can call the Long-Term Living Helpline toll-free at 1-866-286-3636 for assistance on how to apply. You may also visit the Long-Term Living website at <http://www.ltlinpa.com>
- Your Service Coordinator will work with you to determine your Individual Budget based on your needs (Services My Way only).

2.2 Can I have a Representative who speaks for me?

Yes, if you are in the Aging waiver. Your representative can be a legal guardian or other legally appointed personal representative, an income payee, any family member, or friend of your choice who is acting in your best interest. Contact your Service Coordinator for additional details.

2.3 What are my Rights?

📌 As a consumer of the Office of Long-Term Living, you have the following rights:

You have the freedom to choose.

- You have the freedom to choose either the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way service model for some of your services.
- You have the right to be treated with dignity, courtesy, consideration and respect at all times.
- You have the right to have your privacy respected at all times.
- You have the right to withdraw from the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way model at any time.

2.4 What are my Responsibilities?

📌 As a consumer of the Office of Long-Term Living, you also take on additional responsibilities when you choose self-directed services.

- Develop or change your Individual Service Plan, back-up plan, Individual Budget (SMW only) and Spending Plan (SMW only) with your Service Coordinator.
- Manage your employees.
 - Treat all of your employees with dignity, courtesy, consideration and respect at all times.
 - Decide what special knowledge or skills your employee must possess.
 - Decide who to hire and fire.
- Determine your employee's wages (SMW only) and work schedules.
 - Review and submit all approved purchases, invoices and timesheets to your Fiscal/Employer Agent.
- Complete all the necessary paperwork required for your employees.
 - Your Fiscal/Employer Agent will assist you as needed.
- Make decisions about the best way to meet your needs, receive and use goods and services and then judge how those goods and services work for you, making changes as needed (SMW only).
- Provide training for your employees.
- Appeal any decision made if you have problems with your services.
- Voluntarily withdraw from self-directed services model at any time.
- Use your Individual Budget responsibly; your Spending Plan must reflect your assessed service needs identified in your Individual Service Plan (SMW only).
- Review and ask questions on all information provided to you regarding the Consumer-Employer or Services My Way model.

You have the right to make choices. You are responsible for reviewing and asking questions on the information provided to you so that you can make informed choices.

2.5 Will I Still Have a Service Coordinator?

Yes, you will still have a Service Coordinator who will:

Your Service Coordinator will collaborate with you to develop your Individual Service Plan.

- Provide you with necessary information on each service model so you can make a fully informed choice on how you would like to receive your services.
- Inform you of your rights and responsibilities under each service model.
- Collaborate with you to develop your

Individual Service Plan based on your personal, social, and educational needs and goals.

- Determine the value of your Individual Budget (SMW only).
- Facilitate and assist you as necessary with the development of your Spending Plan.
- Monitor and assist with revisions to your Individual Service Plan, Individual Budget (SMW only), and Spending Plan (SMW only).
- Assist you in selecting traditional providers, if you choose.
- Monitor provision of services including such things as interviews or monitoring visits with you and your service providers.
- Link you with training that you request and that is specific to your Individual Service Plan.
- Review monthly budget reports from your Fiscal/Employer Agent (SMW only).
- Assist you in developing and implementing your back-up plan as necessary.
- Inform you of available community resources and peer support opportunities.

2.6 What is a Fiscal/Employer Agent?

A vendor who acts as your agent or representative for the purpose of receiving and disbursing program funds; withholding, filing and depositing your employee's federal and state employment taxes; collecting, verifying and processing your employee's time sheets; preparing and disbursing your employee's payroll checks; and processing and paying non-labor related invoices included in the your Spending Plan. The Fiscal/Employer Agent also assists in verifying your employee's citizenship/legal alien status, providing technical assistance and generating standardized reports for you and the state program agencies.

2.7 What if I have a Complaint?

If you have a complaint, there are a variety of options available to you to try to resolve it:

- Speak to a supervisor at your provider agency
- Speak to your Service Coordinator
- Speak to the complaint department (sometimes available in larger agencies)
- Contact the OLTL Helpline

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- Switch providers
- Terminate your employee

The best option for you will depend on your individual situation and the nature of your complaint.

 Numbers to Call if I have a Complaint:
My Service Coordinator:
Name
Agency
Phone
My Service Coordinator's Supervisor:
Name
Phone
My Service Coordinator's Complaint Department:
Phone
My Fiscal/Employer Agency:
Name
Agency
Phone
Contacts at Another Provider I Use:
Name
Agency
Phone
Contacts at Another Provider I Use:
Name
Agency
Phone
The OLTL Helpline:
Phone 1-800-757-5042

2.8 What is the Appeal Process?

- When a decision is made to deny, reduce, change or stop your services, you will receive a letter that tells you about the appeal process. If you don't agree with a decision, you may file an appeal.

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- If the services you currently receive are being stopped or reduced, you can continue to receive the service while your case is in the appeal process.
- Please consult with your local Area Agency on Aging or your Service Coordination Agency for more details on the appeal process, as each waiver or program handles the process in a different manner.

Chapter 3: Spending Plan Development

- 3.1 How is my Individual Budget determined?
- 3.2 What goods and services can I buy?
- 3.3 Who can I hire?
- 3.4 Can I purchase services from a local business which specializes in providing these services, such as a Visiting Nurse Association?
- 3.5 Who approves my spending plan?
- 3.6 What if my needs change?

If you have chosen the Services My Way model, you will have an Individual Budget and Spending Plan to help determine how to best meet your service needs

3.1 How is my Individual Budget determined?

You will be assessed to determine what type of services you need to help you complete your routine for daily living. You and your Service Coordinator will develop your Individual Service Plan based upon your needs as identified through the assessment process. Your Individual Service Plan is the plan that details the services you want and need and the provision of these services. Your Service Coordinator will ask for approval from the Office of Long Term Living for your Individual Service Plan.

 Needs and Goals I Want Included on My Service Plan:

(Self-directed services may not be able to cover all of your needs and goals, but it is important to identify them.)

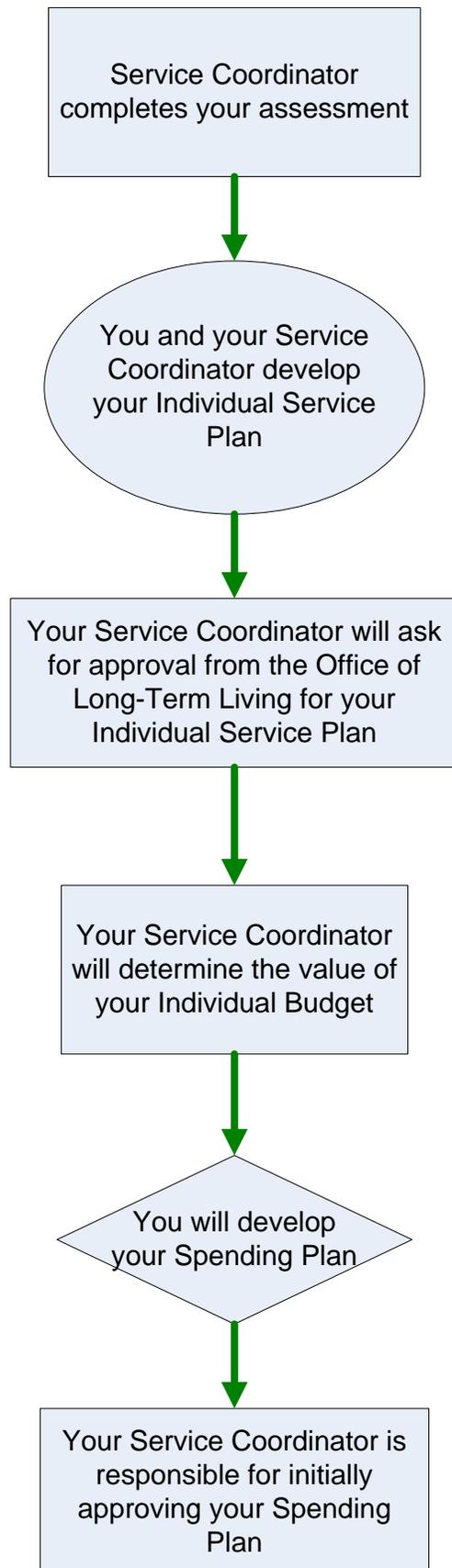
SPENDING PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Your Service Coordinator will determine the value of your Individual Budget based on your assessed needs during the development of your Individual Service Plan. Your Individual Budget is the calculated value of your Individual Service Plan.

You will develop your Spending Plan to determine how your Individual Budget is spent. Your Spending Plan is the detailed budget that describes what, how much and from whom you will obtain goods and services that meet your needs as identified in your Individual Service Plan. Your Service Coordinator can help you develop your Spending Plan and is responsible for initially approving it. Your Fiscal/Employer Agent will pay the invoices in accordance with your Spending Plan as authorized by you.

The cost of the monthly Fiscal/Employer Agent service fee is deducted from the Individual Budget amount and is not reflected in your Spending Plan.

This flowchart depicts the process you will go through to determine your Spending Plan.



3.2 *What goods and services can I buy?*

Goods and services will address a need identified in your Individual Service Plan

You may purchase services, equipment, supplies, or goods not otherwise provided through the Aging or Attendant Care Waivers, or through the Medicaid State Plan or other third party payers. These items will address an identified need in your Individual Service Plan, including improving and maintaining opportunities for full participation in the community, and will meet one or more of the following requirements. The item or service would:

- Decrease your need for other Medicaid services;
- Promote or maintain your inclusion in the community;
- Promote your independence;
- Increase your health and safety in your home environment;
- Develop or maintain your personal, social, physical, or work-related skills;
- Increase the ability of your unpaid family members and friends to receive training and education needed to provide support; or
- Fulfill your need as identified in your Individual Service Plan.

Self-directed goods and services are purchased from the Individual Budget as outlined in your Spending Plan.

3.3 *Who can I hire?*

You may hire a friend, neighbor, relative (other than your spouse) or just someone you trust.

 The person you choose must meet the following requirements:

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Have the required skills to perform community support services as specified in your Individual Service Plan or be willing to receive such training;
- Be able to communicate with you;
- Possess a valid Social Security number;
- Have a criminal history background check performed;
- Not be your designated representative or legally authorized guardian or power of attorney.

3.4 *Can I purchase services from a local business which specializes in providing these services, such as a Visiting Nurse Association?*

Yes. You may identify local businesses in your Spending Plan as long as the overall cost is within your Individual Budget.

3.5 *Who approves my spending plan?*

Your Spending Plan is initially approved by your Service Coordinator.



Your Spending Plan should:

- Be within your Individual Budget.
- Include a back-up plan.
- Meet the needs identified on your Individual Service Plan.
- Contain goods and services allowed under the Services My Way model (See list in Chapter One).

3.6 *What if my needs change?*

If your needs or goals change, you will meet with your Service Coordinator to change your Individual Service Plan, Individual Budget and Spending Plan. You may also request a review of your Individual Budget at any time.

You may also request a review of your Individual Budget at any time.



Goods and Services I Would Like to Include on My Spending Plan:

Chapter 4: Putting My Spending Plan into Action

4.1 How do I monitor my Spending Plan?

4.2 How do I make changes to my Spending Plan?

4.3 What if Services My Way is not working for me?

In the last chapter, you learned how to create a Spending Plan if you have chosen the Services My Way model. Now that you have a Spending Plan, it's time to make that plan work for you!

4.1 How do I monitor my Spending Plan?

Your Fiscal/Employer Agent and Service Coordinator will assist in monitoring your Spending Plan. Your Fiscal/Employer Agent will provide you with written financial reports on a monthly and quarterly basis and as requested by you, your Service Coordinator or the Office of Long-Term Living. Your Service Coordinator will track under-spending and over spending and contact you to resolve potential service delivery problems.

Your Fiscal/Employer Agent will provide you with written financial reports while your Service Coordinator will track spending.

4.2 How do I make changes to my Spending Plan?

In order to make changes to your Spending Plan, you will need to contact your Service Coordinator for any of the following modifications:

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- There is a change in your personal circumstances that require a reassessment.
- You are hospitalized.
- You want to pay the employee more.
- You want to modify your Individual Budget.
- You want to change the purpose for what your savings may be used.
- You want to change your Individual Service Plan, back-up plan, Individual Budget, or Spending Plan.
- You used your savings to make a special purchase and now want to continue saving for another item which will support independence.

 It is **not necessary** to contact the Service Coordinator for any of the following modifications:

- You want to change an employee's start time.
- You want to distribute work hours more evenly by assigning more hours to one employee, and this change will not exceed your Individual Budget limit.
- You want to change how an employee will do assigned tasks.
- You want to reschedule an employee from one day to the next.
- You need to use your back-up plan.

4.3 What if Services My Way is not working for me?

You may discontinue participation in the Services My Way service model at any time and choose another model of service without an interruption in services. If you decide to return to the Services My Way model, you may contact your Service Coordinator to discuss re-enrollment.

Chapter 5: Being the Employer

- 5.1 Where Do I Start?
- 5.2 How Do I Write a Job Description?
- 5.3 How Do I Recruit and Choose My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.4 How Do I Screen an Applicant?
- 5.5 How Do I Interview an Applicant?
- 5.6 How Do I Check an Applicant's References?
- 5.7 How Do I Perform a Criminal Background Check on My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.8 How Do I Schedule My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.9 How Do I Train My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.10 How Do I Pay My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.11 How Do I Fire My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.12 How Do I Provide a Safe Work Environment for My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.13 How Do I Purchase Worker's Compensation Insurance for My Direct Care Worker?
- 5.14 How Do I Prevent Myself from Being a Victim of a Theft?
- 5.15 Tips to Effective Communication

Managing your own services is similar to running your own business. There are rules you must follow to comply with state and federal laws. There are also good practices you may want to use to make your experience as an employer better and to build a great service team.

5.1 Where Do I Start?

You should begin by assessing your needs. This will assist you in developing a job description and interview questions that can be used for screening and interviewing applicants, and for developing schedules. If you don't know what your own needs are, how can you list them for someone else? Don't just think of

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your physical needs. You also want to consider your likes and dislikes – Your Life Style!

Here are some things you may want to consider:

- How do you like your home to look?
 - Some duties may include cleaning your home and should be included in the contract. What duties and how often you want them done could be but are not limited to – dusting, vacuuming, sweeping/mopping, sanitizing the bathroom/kitchen, etc.
- What foods do you like to eat?
 - Do you have any special dietary needs?
 - What your expectations are regarding your attendant sharing your food?
 - Do you want them to bring their own food?
 - Any limits you may have on use of the kitchen?
- What you expect when there is a call off.
 - What you expect if coverage is needed? This should be arranged prior to any calls off occurring. A home health agency may be used as back-up, so any requirements of that agency should be done in advance so there is no interruption in your services.
 - Define calls off and what people you want notified in the event a worker is not available for their shift.
 - Be sure your employees know how to tell you when they need to call off. Do they need to call within a certain time frame?
- How do you feel about your direct care worker using tobacco, or smoking while on the job?
 - If you smoke, will you allow your attendants to smoke on duty? You need to be considerate if they don't smoke.
 - If you don't smoke will you allow your attendants to smoke while on duty and if so where do you expect them to smoke. If you don't want them to smoke in your residence, don't let them!
 - You want to set these guidelines during the interview and incorporate them in the contract between you and your attendant.
- When do you like to go to bed and get up in the morning?
 - If you need assistance getting into and out of bed you are responsible for developing this schedule and you must adhere to it unless a change in times is agreed on prior to the occurrence.
 - If your direct care worker comes at the scheduled time to assist you in getting up and you decide that you want to sleep in, it is not fair to your attendant that had to get up and be available. They could have slept in too if it was agreed on prior to the occurrence. You should also consider when you may want to sleep in and build it into your schedule.
 - Don't forget to schedule time for turning in bed during the night, if necessary.

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- You want to mention as many of your daily activities as you can think of prior to hiring.
 - This may include telephone messages, meals for guests, use of motor vehicles, participation in religious holidays, attendance in gatherings with friends and family, the temperature of the house, use of the television and stereo, etc.

You can use the Individual Service Plan that you and your Service Coordinator developed to help assess your own needs. You should have a copy of this for your files. If you don't have one, your Service Coordinator can give you a copy.

Your Individual Service Plan can help you assess your own needs. You should have a copy from your Service Coordinator.

You can also assess your own needs by making checklists. The following lists are some ideas for starting your checklists.

 TASKS

• Bathing	• Eating/Feeding	• Shopping
• Grooming	• Meal Clean Up	• Transfers/ Repositioning
• Dressing	• House Cleaning	• Communication
• Toileting	• Exercising	• Transportation for Errands
• Meal Preparation	• Assistance with Equipment	• Household Management

Break each task into steps based on how you like things to be done such as:

Bathing:

- Set up Bathroom
- Lay out clothes you chose
- Prepare your bath water
- Assist you to bath area
- Assist as directed by you
- Dry you as directed
- Apply deodorant, skin cream, powder etc.
- Assist you with dressing

House Cleaning:

- Daily tasks
- Weekly tasks
- Monthly tasks



I Need Help with These Tasks:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

 Task Checklists

Task 1	Task 6	Task 11
Task 2	Task 7	Task 12
Task 3	Task 8	Task 13
Task 4	Task 9	Task 14
Task 5	Task 10	Task 15

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Once you have completed your self assessment you are ready to look for a direct care worker.

5.2 How Do I Write a Job Description?

Before you start looking for someone to provide services for you, it is a good idea to write a job description for that service or job. A job description is important and gives you, as an employer, the opportunity to clearly define the type of person you would like to hire.

A job description has several uses:

- A job description gives potential workers a good idea of what the job requires.
- It can be used as a guideline for asking questions during the interview.
- It can be used as a checklist of duties and responsibilities after a worker has been hired and is being trained.
- It can be helpful when deciding if you are happy with the way a worker is doing the job.

The job description should be written with your personal needs in mind and should include:

- Basic job duties
- Required qualifications
- The way you want the job done
- The number of hours and days needed

The information on the job description does not have to be permanent. It is fine to change the job description later if you change your mind about what you need. However, if you change the job description after you hire someone, you should discuss the changes with the worker to make sure they understand. If you change the job duties too much, the worker may not be qualified, agree to continue, or want to work unless pay is increased.

Job descriptions can be written in a lot of different ways. The most important thing is that the information be shared with the worker before he or she agrees to accept the job.

5.3 How Do I Recruit and Choose My Direct Care Worker?

 When recruiting and choosing your direct care worker, there are requirements that you must follow. The Department of Public Welfare requires that direct care workers **MUST**:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Have the required skills to perform services as specified in your service plan

BEING THE EMPLOYER

- Possess basic math, reading, and writing skills
- Possess a valid social security number
- Be willing to submit to a criminal record check
- If you require it, be able to demonstrate the capability to perform health maintenance activities specified in your service plan or be willing to receive the training to provide the activities.
- You **cannot** hire your spouse, power of attorney, legal or designated representative, or guardian.

The first steps you need to take as an employer is recruiting your direct care worker(s). At first, this may seem like an extremely difficult task. The following information can assist you in this process.

The first step you need to take as an employer is recruiting your workers.

- One way to find a direct care worker is to let your friends know you are looking for one. They may be able to recommend someone.
- You could also contact local employment services. Many people who are doing a job search begin there.
- Another way to find a direct care worker is to advertise. You can advertise in the newspaper, local free ad magazines, newsletters (at universities, churches and community groups), community bulletin boards, employment agencies, social service agencies and even on the internet (can also search ads on the internet).

Caution:

- Listing your phone number increases your risk of unwanted or harassing calls.
- Including your address can open you up to unwanted visitors and criminal elements.
- For safety, you could use a phone number of another person who will take messages for you. Another option is to establish an e-mail account to use specifically for applicants. You can also use a post office box. Most newspapers will offer a box number to you if you place an ad with them.
- Saturday and Sunday are the days the papers are most read.
 - Bold type heading makes your ad more noticeable
 - You can also check the situations wanted section.
- When writing your ad you can list what the job is and the duties. You can also list the shifts you require and any training or experience you want in a prospective direct care worker. Including the hourly pay may be helpful. Decide if you want mail or phone responses and include that contact information.

✂ Here are some sample newspaper ads

EARN EXTRA MONEY

9.50/hr PT personal care/household work for female with disability Evening hours on West side, no experience necessary, will train. Call Dot at 555-1234

FT POSITION/\$10/HR DAYLIGHT HOURS PERSONAL CARE FOR QUADRAPLEGIC ON BUSLINE E-MAIL RESUME TO RESPONSE@GMAIL.COM



Information for My Newspaper Ad:

5.4 *How Do I Screen an Applicant?*

Screening applicants is an important step as it will eliminate applicants that you feel wouldn't be qualified for the position. Screening saves you time in the long run.

- You should screen applicants over the telephone to determine if an interview is worth both yours and the applicant's time.
 - Always be friendly and pleasant on the telephone.
 - Call people back as soon as possible
- You should do the following when screening an applicant:
 - Give a brief job description of the duties, hours/schedule, and pay they can expect
 - Write this description out so it is the same for every applicant that calls.
- You want to ask questions about their experience with the description you gave. Applicants can disqualify themselves if they don't meet the requirements to meet your needs.
 - Some possible questions could be –
 - Why are you interested in this type of work?
 - What kind of experience/training do you have?
 - Do you have reliable transportation?
 - You may want to tell applicants if you smoke or have pets as this may eliminate some people.
 - Ask if they smoke if that's a concern, or ask about their ability to lift and transfer if that is an essential job function.
 - Listen for specifics in their description of previous experiences instead of vague or general statement.
- You want to ask specifically what kind of schedule they prefer or their availability.
- You want to listen for a pleasant tone of voice and positive attitude on the phone.
- You should always take the name, address, and telephone number of all the people that call and let them know that you have several more telephone interviews and will call them to set up an interview.
 - Schedule interviews with the applicants that you really liked.
 - Even if the person does not seem suitable for the job, always thank them for their interest. You may want to file their name and address; it may come in handy in the future.

Sample Telephone Screening

1. Introduce myself and provide a brief description of the position:
I am looking for a personal assistant to assist me with performing routine tasks of daily living at my instruction. I have several workers and am looking to fill a late evening shift. The hours are 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. The salary is \$8.00 to \$10.00 per hour. Some benefits may be available.
2. Does this sound like a position you would be interested in?
3. Can you describe your experience?
4. Do you have reliable transportation?
5. I have two cats. Are you allergic to cats?
6. I have your name and phone number. Can you confirm how you spell your name? Can you give me your address?
7. Thanks for taking the time to speak with me. I have several more people to do a phone interview with.
8. (If I'm interested) I will call you back to set up an in-person interview.

5.5 How Do I Interview an Applicant?

After you pre-screen applicants, review all of the information and decide who you feel is the most qualified. You want to schedule personal interviews with the most qualified applicants first. You want to set up interviews with as many qualified applicants as possible. The personal interview is your opportunity to learn as much as possible about the applicant. You can give the applicant a detailed job description, based on your self-assessment, and the hours you need assistance. Interviews will always go better if you are prepared!

*Interviews will
always go better if
you are prepared!*

- If you are uncomfortable holding the interview in your home, then hold it in a neutral location such as your Service Coordinator's office, a coffee shop, library, or a community center.
 - You may choose to have the interview where you live as it gives the applicant a better understanding of what the job will require and what your expectations are.
 - Having someone with you, such as a family member, friend, neighbor, or service coordinator, when you interview applicants is a good idea, especially if you hold the interview in your home.

BEING THE EMPLOYER

- A second person may pick up on things you miss, or help you remember a question that you may have forgotten to ask.
- You can discuss, with the other person in attendance, how the interview went when deciding which applicant you felt was most qualified.
- You can expect that some applicants won't show up for the interview.
- Be friendly and get acquainted with the applicant to set the tone for the interview. First impressions are very important. Describe your disability and demonstrate your ability to direct your own care.
 - If you decide to have another person at the interview, let the applicant know that you are the one interviewing them and you will be the one making the decision whether to hire them or not.
 - You want to hold the interview in a quiet place that is free of distractions. Turn the TV and radio off and make sure any pets and/or children present will not be an interruption.
 - Wear clothes that convey a sense of confidence.
 - Sit in a location that allows you to have eye contact with the applicant. Be observant of eye contact and body language of the applicant as this will allow you to get a sense of how they are feeling as well as who they are.



- Have a folder for each interview that includes:
 - A blank job application.
 - A job description
 - Checklist of duties and shifts
 - Educational information about your disability
 - A list of the interview questions prepared ahead of time
 - The applicants resume and references
- Plan the interview questions:
 - Decide ahead of time what questions you want to ask and write them down.
 - Ask questions that will give you more than a yes/no answer. You want to get insight into what this person has to offer for the job.
 - Use the same questions for each interview. This allows you to compare the applicants equally.
 - Make sure you do not ask illegal questions. (see examples below)
 - Have the applicant fill out the application and give them the job description to go over.
 - While the applicant looks over the job description you can look at the application and see what needs to be clarified.
 - Have a way to evaluate answers to the questions, whether in words or with a number corresponding to the value of the answer.
 - For example: 1 can mean poor and 10 can mean excellent.

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- When you are done asking questions, always ask the applicant if they have any questions. Their questions can tell you how well they were listening and how well they understand the job.
- Avoid making these common interviewing mistakes.
 - You do not dominate the interview. Let the interviewee do the majority of talking so you can learn more about them.
 - When an applicant mentions information that may be relevant, don't forget to follow up on it.
 - For example, if they mention they had previous training that relates to the job, ask questions to find out how long ago, how long it lasted, and how much it pertains to being your attendant.
- Be aware of some signs that the person you are interviewing may not be right for the job. These could be signs you definitely don't want to hire the person.
 - Has alcohol on the breath
 - Has greasy hair and dirty fingernails
 - Is rude
 - Is late
 - Discloses confidential information about previous employer
 - Takes control of the interview
 - Expresses sympathy, being overly considerate or hypertensive
 - Stares or makes prolonged eye contact, which could be a sign of aggression
 - Makes little eye contact
 - Begins the interview by telling you all things he/she cannot do or all the times he/she cannot work
 - Has no references (even if a person just moved to the area they should have friends or previous employers)
 - Says he/she really needs a job and will take anything for now
 - Looks to the non-disabled person in the room for instructions and/or verification as if they didn't hear what you were saying.

Questions NOT to ask

- Ethnic Origin or Background
- Color/Race
- Nationality or National Origin
- Religion
 - You MAY ask how the person feels about working on Sundays or other holidays if you need them on those days.
- Age
 - You MAY ask if they are over 18.
- Sex

*Protect
yourself!
Employers are
legally not
allowed to ask
these questions!*

BEING THE EMPLOYER

- Disability
 - You MAY state that lifting is a part of the job, primarily to help you transfer, and ask if there are any reasons they would not be able to perform this task?"
- Political Belief
- Family or Marital Status
 - You MAY state that the job involves working on Weekends, Sundays, and even Holidays. And ask, "Are you available at those times?"
- Source of Income

Samples of Questions to Ask and Why

1. Does everything on the job description make sense to you?
You ask this to know if the applicant understands the job.
2. What type of food do you like to cook?
Know what they are good at cooking so you can have that to eat.
3. Why are you interested in this line of work?
Compatibility, Attitude about the work
4. What qualities do you feel like you bring to this job?
Persons feelings about themselves
5. How do you feel about taking direction from others?
Will they be able to take direction from you?
6. What stresses you out and how do you deal with it?
Ability to deal with stressful situations
7. What do you think confidentiality in this job means?
Understand privacy issues
8. Would you be willing to drive my car to run errands or transport me in your car?
Ability to adapt and run errands

Situational Questions

- A. You come to work and find that my refrigerator stopped working and all the food we planned for this weeks meals was spoiled, what would your next step be?
 - i. An answer will give you the personal ability to problem solve and come up with a new plan on the spot.
- B. It is a Sunday afternoon and another attendant calls off, so I call you and ask you to come in, how would you feel about that?
 - i. Shows the persons ability to change plans and come in when needed

 Sample Interview

Charlie: Hi, I'm Charlie Garth. Have a seat.

Beth: Thank you.

Charlie: Did you find your way all right?

Beth: Yes, your directions were perfect.

Charlie: How about this weather? I sure hope the rain stops soon!

Beth: Me too, it would be nice to see the sun again!

Charlie: Oh, I agree with that. Why don't we go ahead and get started. We talked a little on the phone about your experience. Could you tell me more?

Beth: I used to volunteer in a nursing home for about a year.

Charlie: What kinds of things did you do?

Beth: I would get things for the residents and play cards. Things like that.

Charlie: Is that what got you interested in this kind of work?

Beth: Well, kind of. My grandpa was a resident of that nursing home, and that's why I started volunteering there. I always wished he could be home, but it would have been too hard on our family. He's passed away now. I learned about Home and Community services from a friend and that's how I became interested in doing home care.

Charlie: Well, this job is a lot different than volunteering in a nursing home. I have a spinal cord injury, which means that I have limited use of all four limbs. My disability is called Quadriplegia. I need assistance with all of my personal care like dressing, bathing, cooking, cleaning, and shopping. Actually, I have some lists here that describe what I need help with in detail. They are on the corner of the table. I'd like you to take a couple of minutes to read them. (Applicant reads the lists)

Charlie: I know it looks like a lot, but I have a routine that we will get into. Does everything in the job description make sense to you?

Beth: This section on catheter irrigation. What does it mean?

Charlie: Just as I have difficulty controlling my arms and legs, I don't have control over my bladder so I have a catheter. The type of catheter I have is a tube that goes through my stomach right into my bladder. When my bladder gets full, the urine goes out the hose and into a bag that is strapped to my leg. The bag needs to be emptied as it fills, and there are other tasks related to keeping the site clean and healthy where it enters my body.

Beth: Oh, I see. How would I learn how to do those tasks?

Charlie: I will train you how to do it, along with how I like to have different things done.

(Ask other types of questions as listed above, but you get the picture)

Charlie: Do you have any other questions?

Beth: No, I don't think so.

Charlie: After learning more about me and what this position involves are you still interested in it?

Beth: Oh, yes. It sounds very challenging and exciting!

Charlie: O.K. Then I will need you to fill out this application.

BEING THE EMPLOYER

Charlie: (After reviewing application) You forgot to list the address of your last employer. Do you know it?

Beth: I know the street, but I don't know the exact address.

Charlie: If you could just write in the street then. (After she writes in info.) Well, everything looks in order. I have a few more people to interview before I make a decision. I have your number, and I'll be contacting you either way. Thanks for coming. It was nice meeting you.



My Interview Questions:

5.6 How Do I Check an Applicant's References?

Checking references may save you a lot of trouble later on. This step only takes a few minutes for each applicant and can give you valuable information about the individual. If a reference says they wouldn't hire the individual again that may be an indicator that the person may not be your best choice. Keep in mind that it may have just been a personality conflict and that person may be perfect for your situation. Use your best judgment.

Use your best judgment!

- It is very important to check the references of a potential direct care worker.
 - You can eliminate unsuitable candidates and prevent difficulties in the future.
 - The applicant should supply at least three references. Usually references are professional references, not family or friends. If the person does not have work experience, you can recommend teachers, religious leaders, or non-family members that know the person well.
- You should start by developing a reference form for the applicant to complete.
 - Include name of reference, address, business name if applicable, phone number and e-mail address.
 - If the applicant requests that you do not contact their current employer this should be respected.

✂ Applicant Reference Check	
Applicant's Name:	
Reference Information:	
	Name
	Business Name
	Address
	Phone
	Email
How long have you known the applicant?	
Is the applicant responsible?	
Is the applicant on time and dependable?	
Is the applicant honest?	
What are the applicant's strengths?	
What are the applicant's weaknesses?	
Would you recommend the applicant to be a direct care worker?	

BEING THE EMPLOYER

- You can check references by phone, mail or e-mail.
 - Using the mail will take longer than a phone call.
 - Develop a list of questions regarding the applicant.
 - This list can be used as a guide when phoning a reference. You could also send it to the reference to complete.
- Most employers will not give out much information on former direct care workers due to legal issues.
 - They will disclose when the person worked for them and if they would rehire.
 - An option is to have a release of information form signed.
- Personal references usually will be more informative.
- Check the information you obtain against the persons resume for discrepancies.

5.7 How Do I Perform a Criminal Background Check on My Direct Care Worker?

You will be required to have a criminal history background check performed on the direct care workers that you hire even if the worker is a family member. The purpose of this is to protect your own personal health and safety in your own home. You will be informed of the results of the criminal history background check on your direct care worker. You may still choose to hire a direct care worker even if the worker is found to have a criminal history Your Fiscal Employer Agent will assist you in completion of the proper paperwork.

5.8 How Do I Schedule My Direct Care Worker?

You need to develop your schedules based on the number of hours in your service plan. It is your responsibility to make sure your needs get met, first and foremost! You can consider your attendant's wishes when developing your schedule, but your needs come first.

- Base your schedule on when you need things done.
 - The self-assessment that you have already done is a useful tool when deciding how to schedule your direct care workers. Use your service plan to determine the number of hours per day based on your needs. If you need more or less hours in a day, you need to talk to your Service Coordinator to re-assess your needs.
 - Try to think of every little detail of every day. Think about what has worked well and what hasn't worked. Even the smallest detail could become a big detail if you did not think about it. It cannot be stressed enough to think about everything you may need assistance with.

*It is your
responsibility to
make sure your
needs get met,
first and
foremost!*

BEING THE EMPLOYER

If you go to school or work, how long will it take to get up and ready in the morning?

If you need assistance with meals, how are those hours going to be covered?

Is your attendant expected to be there the whole day or do you need your hours split into shifts?

Will you need to run errands or have your attendant run errands? Any doctor appointments or the need for a hair cut.

If you need assistance getting into bed, what time do you want to go to bed at night?

- If you have more than one employee, it is a good idea to have a monthly schedule so everyone knows exactly when he or she is working.
 - You need to have a back-up plan in case your attendant has an emergency and can't work their scheduled time.
 - Test your back-up plan to make sure it really works!
 - Having an agreement with the person you want to use for your back-up plan is essential!
 - If you plan to use an agency as your back-up plan make sure all the necessary paper work has been completed and the agency is ready to respond in the event they are needed at short notice.
 - If your attendant wants time off, make sure you have a process in place so you can schedule other attendants or your back-up plan attendant for those times.
 - You may want to use a request for time off form or post something similar in a visible location to remind you when you are developing your schedules.
 - No one should change this schedule but you, or with your permission to do so.
 - Using a calendar to do a schedule works very well. You can do this using a computer or writing names and hours on a calendar. See the following sample on next page.

5.9 How Do I Train My Direct Care Worker?

Before training a direct care worker you must determine their job duties. This can be done by using the checklists you developed in your self-assessment of your personal care routine, household duties and any errands to be performed. Break each task into steps.

- Be patient and communicate. Explain what you need assistance with and what you can do yourself. Be realistic about what you can do “safely” by yourself.
 - Show your direct care worker exactly what, when, and how you want certain tasks performed.
 - Encourage questions
 - Tell the direct care worker what behaviors are unacceptable. For example: tardiness, not performing job duties, poor attitude, discussing personal problems, borrowing money, or not maintaining confidentiality.
 - Explain your medical condition(s) and symptoms.
 - Provide specific training on any equipment, as well as how to maintain it.
 - Tell your direct care workers when you are pleased with their work.
- During training, you should take one task at a time. One way to do this is to have the new attendant follow along, on the checklist or (through verbal instruction) while watching a former or current attendant perform the activity. Encourage the new attendant to ask questions about any details they need clarified. Discuss each task with the new direct care worker before they perform the activity.
- You are now ready to begin on-the-job training.
 - Have the attendant review the checklist and ask questions about any duties he or she is unsure of performing.
 - This gives the attendant an outline of the general steps in the task and an idea of the expected outcome.
 - While both you and the attendant refer to the checklist, begin the routine one-step at a time.
 - Remember, checklists do not provide all the details about how a particular task should be performed. It’s your responsibility to give instructions to make sure the attendant knows exactly how you want the job done.
- You may consider developing an agreement or contract with your direct care worker.
 - See Sample Agreement/Contract in Chapter 6
- Make sure your direct care worker is aware of the following things:

Encourage your new workers to ask questions about any details they need clarified.

BEING THE EMPLOYER



NOTE: You should go over this verbally with the direct care worker and have it available in a visible location such as on the side of the refrigerator or on a bulletin board

<i>My Health Conditions are:</i>	
<i>My Physician's Name is</i>	<i>My Physician's Phone number is:</i>
<i>The Name of My Pharmacy is</i>	<i>My Pharmacy's Phone number is:</i>
<i>I take the following medications: (You might consider making this a separate chart. Include dose and frequency.)</i>	
<i>I Should Not Eat the Following Foods:</i>	<i>I am Allergic to the Following:</i>
<i>In case of an emergency, you should contact:</i>	
<i>The ambulance service I use is</i>	<i>The Hospital I prefer is</i>

BEING THE EMPLOYER

5.10 How Do I Pay My Direct Care Worker?

Although people may become a direct care worker out of a desire to assist others, the truth is that earning money is most likely their main concern. As an employer it is your duty to know the process and assure you and your direct care worker follow the steps required for timely and accurate paychecks.

- You will get timesheets for each attendant to use from your Fiscal Employer Agent.
- The hours worked are filled in on the timesheets each day by the scheduled attendant.
- At the end of each pay period, you or your representative will review the timesheets for accuracy, sign them, (only to be signed by you or your representative) and send them to the Fiscal Employer Agent.
- The Fiscal Employer Agent is the paying agent for each of your attendants.
 - The Fiscal Employer Agent will process the payroll, take out any applicable taxes, and file them with the IRS. If you have questions, you should call your Fiscal Employer Agent for more details.

 You are responsible for staying within the amount of hours in your service plan/spending plan. You will run out of hours/money before the end of the month if you exceed your hours.

5.11 How Do I Fire My Direct Care Worker?

Terminating an employee is never an easy task. It is necessary if the direct care worker's job performance or behavior is not working out. It is important to remember that you are in charge. If you are not happy with the way things are, it is up to you to change it.

- Termination should be a process.
 - Don't use dismissal as a threat.
 - Give feedback to the employee about your concerns as they occur.
- The next step is a reprimand.
 - You should do this in writing and clearly state the problem and possible solutions and have your direct care worker sign this document.
 - You should be open to discussion with the direct care worker about resolving problems and what steps will be taken if the issue occurs again.
- The final step is dismissal.
 - Steps 1 and 2 should have prepared the direct care worker and reduced any surprise.
 - You must have back-up plans in place before dismissing the direct care worker. You must make sure that your needs will be met before you dismiss an employee.

BEING THE EMPLOYER

- If you have a contract with the direct care worker you can use it to support your decision to let them go. Point out what parts of the contract they have not met and why this puts you in jeopardy.

You may want to consider having a trusted person with you when you dismiss the direct care worker.

- Have a list prepared of the items the direct care worker needs to return to you and ask for them at this time.
- Discuss the final timesheet, or pay as appropriate.

Don't argue with the direct care worker. If the person becomes aggressive or hostile ask them to leave immediately and call the police if necessary.

5.12 How Do I Provide a Safe Work Environment for My Direct Care Worker?

Just as your direct care worker has a duty to ensure your safety, you have the same duty toward them. Looking out for the direct care worker's safety can prevent injuries that could result in direct care worker's compensation claims and put your health and safety in jeopardy by possible lack of coverage for your personal care needs.

- You should conduct a tour of your home.
 - Look for anything that could be a safety hazard, such as rugs that could be tripped over or sharp edges.
 - Make sure any issues found are corrected.
 - A first aid kit should also be handy.
- You should have the direct care worker's complete information in case there is an emergency in which you need to contact someone on his or her behalf.
- The direct care worker should be trained on proper transferring techniques to prevent injury.
- Make sure universal precautions are followed.
 - This will protect you and your direct care worker.
- Have smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
 - Train the direct care worker on how to use the fire extinguisher.
 - If your service provider offers this training have your direct care workers attend it.
- Be aware of dangerous substances in your home, such as bleach.
 - Provide gloves for use by the direct care worker.
- Keep all mechanical equipment checked and maintained.
- Ensure all pets are free of parasites.
- Develop a safety plan and train your direct care worker concerning it.
 - Keep this safety plan in a visible place.



Safety Plan for My Household Workers

Personal Safety:

My Equipment Needs

My Critical Medications

My Communication Needs

Household Safety:

Location of Fire Extinguishers

Location of First Aid Kit

Location of Critical Supplies

(You must notify me if you require non-latex gloves.)

Building Evacuation Plan

Meeting Location

Special Notes

Resources:

Police Department

Neighbor

Fire Department

Emergency Contact

Building Manager/Maintenance

My Doctor

Service Coordinator

Ambulance

Worker's Compensation Contact Information

Other Numbers

Policy Number:

5.13 How Do I Purchase Worker's Compensation Insurance for My Direct Care Worker?

Direct care worker's compensation insurance is a means of protecting you and your direct care worker. You are ultimately responsible to make sure your Fiscal Employer Agent takes responsibility for all of the needed paperwork and sending payments in a timely manner. You should familiarize yourself with this requirement. The Fiscal Employer Agent may also be able to provide training for you in the event your attendant needs to file a claim due to injury on the job.

- All employers need to be covered by direct care worker's compensation insurance, but it will be taken care of by the Fiscal Employer Agent.
- The Fiscal Employer Agent will take care of securing and renewing direct care workers' compensation insurance policies, paying the premiums, collecting data on claims, and keeping track of what is paid to direct care workers.
- The amount owed for direct care workers' compensation insurance should be calculated into the wage being paid to each attendant.

5.14 How Do I Prevent Myself from Being a Victim of a Theft?

Preventing theft is an important thing to consider when you have direct care workers in your home. We may want to trust everyone but that is not always advisable.

 Below are some tips to prevent getting ripped off by your attendant.

- Screen attendants thoroughly.
 - This means never hire someone until you have had an opportunity to check their references.
- Never leave valuables lying around.
 - The most common items stolen are jewelry and money.
 - Always lock your jewelry in a safe place.
 - Keep your money on yourself or close to you.
- Keep track of your medication.
 - Always keep your medication locked up.
 - Also, keep track of how many pills you have.
- Avoid letting your attendant write checks or withdraw money for you.
 - One of the easiest ways for attendants to steal money is to forge checks.
 - Never give attendants access to your checkbook or bankcards when you are not around.

Don't give them your card and your pin number and send them to the bank alone. ALWAYS accompany attendants when money is concerned.

Preventing theft is important to consider when you have workers in your home.

BEING THE EMPLOYER

- ALWAYS have attendants give you receipts for any errands you have them run for you. Use cash if you send them on errands.
- Never give your credit card to your attendant to use.
 - A credit card is one of the simplest ways an attendant can steal from you.
- Avoid letting your attendant use your property for his or her personal use.
 - Many people get ripped-off through the abuse of personal property.
 - This includes use of your van, phone, and apartment.
- Be sure to get your key back when an attendant quits or is fired.
 - If your attendant fails to return your keys, have your locks changed immediately.
 - Have all keys you may give to attendants stamped with “Do Not Duplicate.”
 - Combinations on locks controlled by keypad combinations should always be changed when an attendant quits or you terminate them.
- Keep an eye on things.
 - From the first day, let your attendant know that you will be keeping track of medication, van miles, phone calls, etc.

If you are the victim of theft, confront the attendant to get their side of the story (unless it would be unsafe to do so). If it is clear that they took something, call the police. If you are afraid that the attendant will harm you, let the police know.

5.15 Tips to Effective Communication

Communication Tips

Having good communication between you and your attendants is very important. Good communication is a skill and needs to be practiced. This skill is natural to some people and very unnatural to others. Good communication always makes for better working relationships.

Good communication is a skill. It needs to be practiced!

- Effectively communicating with your direct care workers will help reduce the number of conflicts or issues that may arise.
- Although many types of communication are present in any relationship, you should always try to be an assertive communicator.
 - Assertive communicators are:
 - People who can treat themselves and others with respect

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- People who stand up for their thoughts and beliefs without violating the thoughts and beliefs of others
- People who are direct and honest without being rude.
- People who clearly state their own ideas and needs
- People who are self-confident even when another person disagrees with what they have to say
- Assertive communication is not something that comes naturally. Practicing some of these skills will benefit you. If you can follow the outline of assertive statements below you will be on your way to better assertive communication.
 - Do not put yourself down, always speak positively of yourself
 - When speaking to your attendant use “I”. In doing so you are taking the responsibility for the actions that are taking place. As an example, “I would like you to cut the carrots up smaller next time.” Instead of saying, “It would be nice if you could find a way to cut the carrots up smaller next time.”
 - Do not use the word “but”. In general, people will become defensive when you use this word and may even stop listening when they hear it.
- Do not speak down to your attendant even if they are much younger than you. They are your employee and they are also your equal.
- Do not forget to let your attendant know when they have done an exceptional job with a task. Simply giving them a nice polite “thank you” will let them know that the task or gesture was greatly appreciated.

 Remember: Effective communication does not always come naturally to everyone so make sure to practice to develop these skills.

Giving Feedback

Giving feedback to your direct care worker is an essential part of being an employer. Feedback is information telling the direct care worker how he or she is performing in their job tasks. Feedback lets your direct care worker know what they are doing well and what skills may need improvement. It may also help you retain direct care workers by giving the person praise and respect, as well as

Feedback lets your worker know how he or she is doing in their job.

handling corrective issues in a positive way.

- Providing training initially is the best way to let your direct care worker know what is expected of their work performance.
 - If you are using task checklists, you can go over them with the direct care worker as a type of evaluation and feedback.
 - This applies to the training period as well as an ongoing tool for providing constructive feedback.
- It is very important to provide feedback to your direct care worker. There are two types of feedback:

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- Positive
 - Positive feedback is praising your direct care worker for a job done well.
This lets the person know that you acknowledge their effort and appreciate their work. This should be done frequently. Try not to use the same phrases each time as this can cause the praise and feedback to lose impact and effectiveness.
- Corrective
 - You should give corrective feedback at the time it is needed. One approach is to start by saying something they did right and then presenting the corrective topic.
- Being firm but polite helps you to be assertive but not punishing.
 - You could say “You did a very good job cleaning the bathroom and I appreciate it. In the future will you also mop the hall please?”
- Being a good employer means being the boss without being a dictator or a doormat.
 - It is difficult for many people to accept the role of boss.
 - Remember you are in charge of the duties performed by your attendant.
 - If something goes wrong, or you are not happy with the way things are being done, it is up to YOU to fix it or change it.
 - You are responsible for your own routine.
 - If your attendant is not performing the tasks as well as you would like, then try giving feedback that is more specific.
 - An honest description of your feelings of dissatisfaction may help the situation.
 - If you are still unhappy with their performance, let the attendant go. You will, of course, need to hire another attendant.
- Being in charge does not mean forgetting that your attendant is a person, too, not just an employee.
 - Respecting your attendant can do more for your relationship than screaming or just accepting things the way they are to avoid a confrontation.
 - Treating your direct care worker with respect is the beginning of your direct care worker treating you with respect.

Effective Listening

Listening is very important in developing effective communication skills. Listening skills and communication skills are like peanut butter and jelly. You really can't have one without the other! You need to practice listening to become effective at it just as you have to practice communication skills to become effective. Both communication and listening skills will make you a more effective employer.

- You have to practice to become an effective listener.

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- Too often a listener is thinking of how to respond rather than truly listening.
- When you listen you should engage the person speaking by:
 - Giving them your full attention
 - Paying attention to body language as well as what is being said.
 - Nodding your head or saying “uh huh” or “go on” so the person talking knows you are paying attention to what they are saying.
- You should reiterate what the person is saying to make sure you received the message as intended.
 - Ways to reiterate are:
 - “What I hear you saying is...”
 - “This is my understanding of what you are saying...”
 - “You are angry because...”
 - “You would like...”
- Repeating what the speaker says does not mean that you agree, or don’t have your own opinion on the subject. It just gives the person a sense that you have acknowledged their thoughts or feelings.
- If the person who is speaking is angry they will not hear what you have to say or how you feel, so letting them know you understood what they’re saying will help them to calm down and relax so they can pay more attention to what you have to say.
 - Avoid saying “but.” An example of this is:
 - “I understand you would like the day off, but you didn’t give me enough notice to get back-up”
 - This could cause the person to become defensive and not hear anything else that you say.
 - Instead use:
 - “I understand you would like the day off, and if you had given me more notice I could have arranged for back-up.”
 - This gives the person the sense that you acknowledge their feelings and that you are willing to work with them if they work with you.
- You need to practice effective listening. Effective listening separates acknowledging the thoughts and feelings of a person from approving, agreeing, or persuading that person. It leaves you open to the option of:
 - Agreeing or disagreeing
 - Saying yes or no to a request
 - Saying more about the matter being discussed.

Managing Conflict & Issues

Positive working relationships don’t happen by chance. It takes a lot of work and effort on the part of everyone to make a work environment peaceful and pleasant. As an employer, you are the leader in creating a positive work

*You are the leader in
creating a positive work
environment.*

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environment. Recognizing that not everyone will agree all of the time is a good place to start in promoting a positive working environment. When issues do arise, the employer is the person to take the initiative to find a resolution. There are many ways to resolve issues that occur at the work place. In all cases, it is important to listen to everyone involved in the conflict. This is when you want to use your effective listening skills as described earlier.

Minimizing Workplace Conflicts and Issues

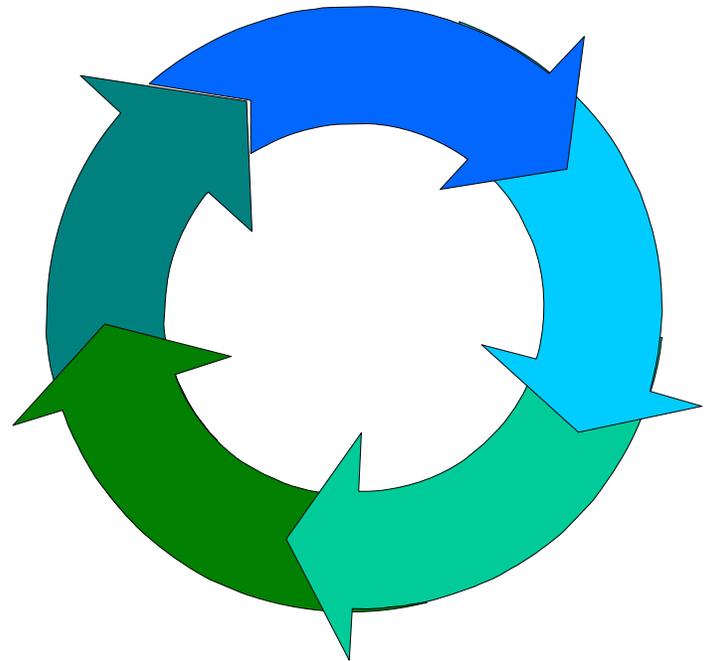
- Hire attendants who fit into your life style. You want the personality of your attendant to mix well with you as well as your other attendants.
- Have an open communication policy so that your attendants always feel like they can talk to you when they have a problem.
- Be fair with all of your attendants. Distribute work hours as evenly as possible, or as you had previously discussed.
- Have a strategy for your attendants to express problems or issues they have. This will allow any issues to be brought to your attention before they evolve into a major issue.
- Set common goals for your attendants. Focus on the tasks you want completed.
- Avoid using language that is loaded. These are words or phrases that have different meanings to different people. They can create strong negative or positive feelings to different individuals. Use words that are straight forward and do not have other meanings.
 - Doing this will ensure no confusion exists between what you said and what your attendant thought you meant.
 - Asking attendants to repeat what you said will confirm they got your message correctly.

How to work through Conflicts and Issues

- **Identify the Problem.** State the conflict in a formal manner by writing it down
 - You may feel there is a problem, but your attendant may not realize that one exists.
 - Make sure to express what is going on that you do not like.
When talking about what you don't like, do it in a neutral way. Keep in mind that it is a situation you don't like, and not a person.

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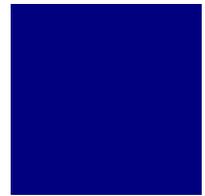
- Use “I” statements. For example say, “I really don’t like when wet towels are left on the floor, I prefer them to be hung over the shower curtain rod.” instead of “How come you’re so lazy leaving towels on the floor!”
- **Define the issue.** You need to explain the problem without using outside influences, such as personalities, motives, blame, or value judgments. Ask open-ended questions to get a clearer picture of the issue.
 - Getting a clear picture of the issue allows you to address the problem in a more precise manor.
- **Brainstorm and Evaluate Solutions.** After identifying and defining issues, generate solutions.
 - Everyone who is involved should be sure to suggest solutions.
 - One key aspect is to make sure the solutions do not focus on individual personalities.
 - After developing several solutions, make sure to evaluate all the positives and negatives of each solution.
- **Choose a Solution and Actions.** Once all the solutions have been evaluated, you will need to choose one that all parties involved will be able to manage.
 - You will use this solution to solve the issue that you have defined.
 - Once you have a solution picked, decide who will take what actions and when they must be completed by. By doing this you will hold yourself and your attendants accountable.
- **Implement and Check the Solution.** Make sure you set a date in the future to ensure the issue is being solved and decide if you need to choose a different solution.



What do you do if these processes do not work?

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- Always know you can ask for help from your Service Coordinator. They will be able to let you know how to handle the issues or will know where you can get help.
- If you notice that the issues or conflicts continue to exist it may be necessary to terminate employment with an attendant.



Chapter 6: Other Information

6.1 Where Can I Find Additional Help and Information?

6.2 Glossary of Terms

6.1 *Where Can I Find Additional Help and Information?*

Contact your Service Coordinator.

 My Service Coordinator is: Name: Phone Number: Email:

6.2 *Glossary of Terms*

Adaptive Equipment	An item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of participants.
Advocate	A person who gives you support or protects your rights.
Aging Waiver	A long term care program that assists frail elderly Pennsylvanians with the services they need to live independently in their own homes and communities.
Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)	There are 52 Area Agencies on Aging, covering all 67 counties. They administer various programs and services offered to older Pennsylvanians. Your local Area Agency on Aging is listed in

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	the blue pages of your phone book or you can find a listing at: http://www.aging.state.pa.us .
Average Regional Agency Personal Assistance Rate	This is the average hourly wage of all direct care workers in a region of Pennsylvania across all provider agencies. This average rate does not take into account the variances in pay due to education, experience, or years with the employer. The rate also does not factor in varying job descriptions or job duties.
Back-up Plan	This is the plan you will use if one of your regular workers or informal supports is temporarily not available.
Budget	Your personalized blueprint for developing supports that show how we are going to buy services within your monthly allowance
Consumer-Employer	A service model that allows you to employ your workers directly.
Direct Care Worker	One who performs activities of daily living that support your health and well-being, promote your ability to care for yourself and your family, assist you to enjoy leisure and recreation, and help you to contribute to society and the community. Also known as Personal Assistance Worker, Personal Service Worker, attendant, and the participant's employee
Fiscal/Employer Agent (F/EA)	A vendor operating under Section 3504 of the IRS Code and Revenue Procedure 70-6 who acts as your agent or representative for the purpose of receiving and disbursing program funds; withholding, filing and depositing federal and state employment taxes; collecting, verifying and processing workers' time sheets; preparing and disbursing workers' payroll checks; and processing and paying non-labor related invoices included in the your Purchasing Plans. The FEA also assists in verifying citizenship/legal alien status, providing technical assistance and generating standardized reports for you and the state program agencies.
Home and Community Based Services	Services provided to you in your home or in the community where you live, to allow you to remain at home rather than in an institution or nursing facility.
Home Modifications	Adaptations to the living environment intended to increase ease of use, safety, security, and independence
Individual Service Plan	A plan of supports and services for you that will be authorized and paid by the waiver or program in which you participate.
Legal Guardian	A court-appointed person who has the legal responsibility for the care and management of an estate, minor or incapacitated person. This term applies to the Aging waiver only.
Participant	An individual enrolled in a home and community based services program. Also referred to as a "consumer."
Personal Assistance	Provides in-home personal assistance services such as help with bathing, dressing, meal preparation and housekeeping. These services differ from traditional homemaker and chore

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	services in that they recognize the consumer's right to make decisions regarding the level and intensity of care; provide hands-on personal care services; and are available at any time depending on the consumer's needs.
Self-Directed Services	Services that allow you to exercise decision making authority over some or all of your waiver services by directly employing your own workers and/or by managing an individual budget to meet your service needs.
Service Coordination Agency	An agency which provides a systematic process for coordinating informal supports and formal services across agencies, departments, and the community. The goal of service coordination is an integrated delivery system that is responsive to the needs of the individuals and families served by the Office of Long Term Living and the community.
Service Coordinator (SC)	One whose job it is to put together, monitor and review the service plan agreed upon after a <i>needs assessment</i> for home and community-based services. This individual is also known as a Care Manager.
Service Model	An approach to receiving services that allows you varying degrees of control over your services. There are three service models within Pennsylvania: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agency, or Traditional, Model where a provider agency hires workers and sends them to your house to assist you. 2. Consumer-Employer 3. Services My Way
Services My Way	A service model that allows you to employ your workers directly and to purchase goods and services that are not normally covered under the waiver or program you are enrolled in.
Spending Plan	A plan or schedule adjusting expenses during a certain period to the estimated or fixed income for that period.
Third Party Payer	An organization, other than the patient (first-party) or health care provider (second-party), involved in the financing of personal health services. A "Third-party payer" can be any insurer, nonprofit hospital service plan, health care service plan, health maintenance organization, self-insurer or any person or other entity which provides payment for medical and related services.
Units	The minimum amount of time or money you can be charged for a given service. For many goods you may purchase, the unit would equal the total cost of the purchase. Most services are paid in 15-minute units. For example, if your direct worker stays five minutes late you must pay him or her for a full fifteen minutes extra.