

# Tips On Selecting the Right Provider

Presented by

Personal Assistance Services Council

Of Los Angeles County

Disclaimer: Personal Assistance Services Council is providing to IHSS consumers the following information and suggestions on how to hire and retain homecare providers as a guide. This information does not intend to infringe upon the Individual Provider (IP) Mode, which allows a consumer to hire, fire, train and supervise their providers, as they deem necessary.

## **Where can I go to find an IHSS Provider?**

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You can use local registries:

- PASC Homecare Registry – Serves IHSS consumers and providers throughout Los Angeles County. Checks references and conducts a limited Criminal Background Investigation (CBI). Uses a computerized database search system.
- You can call your local Senior Center or Independent Living Center. The S.E.I.U. #6434 United Long Term Care Worker's Union also operates a registry for both IHSS and private pay consumers. Their phone number is 1-888-373-3018.

Ask friends, neighbors and family members if they would like to be your provider or know of someone that may be interested.

Advertise in newspapers, local bulletins or community publications. Ask the PASC about referrals to local newspapers.

Place ads on neighborhood bulletin boards, which can be found in places like your local supermarket, Laundromat, place of worship, library, college or university.

## **Planning Ahead and Tips on How to Avoid a Hiring Crisis**

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Get Organized. Know what your needs are.

- ✓ Before filling out the ***Employer Agreement*** (see sample), consider including guidelines on how to handle scheduling issues, food, telephone usage and gas mileage.
- ✓ Before filling out the ***Sample Task Schedule*** (see sample), try to figure out the time it takes to prepare, complete and clean up when performing each authorized task.
- ✓ Store blank copies and completed copies of these documents in a file folder.
- ✓ Think about where you would want to conduct a face-to-face interview (preferably a public place away from home like a senior or community center).
- ✓ Research some options for available interview locations, their addresses, directions and if possible, a contact number. Gather all of that information and place it in the same file folder.

Know your community's resources.

- To find your local Independent Living Center you can call the State Independent Living Council (SILC) at their toll-free number 1-866-866-7452 or by TTY at 1-866-745-2889 or online at [www.calsilc.org](http://www.calsilc.org). You can also find a listing of Independent Living Centers at the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) at (916) 325-1690 or TTY (916) 325-1695 or at their website, [www.cfilc.org](http://www.cfilc.org).

- To find your local senior center you can call the L.A. County Area Agency on Aging Information and Referral hotline at 1-800-510-2020.
- You can also call the Info Line of Los Angeles County by dialing 211 on your phone.
- You can also access this information by calling the PASC's Information and Referral Program at 1-877-565-4477 or by TTY (818) 206-7015.

Before the crisis arises, it would save time to sign up with these registries beforehand. Many registries require forms to be filled out before you can access their lists of homecare providers.

## **How Can I Screen Applicants before Hiring?**

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Where do I begin?

From your file folder, retrieve the documents you prepared and make adjustments if necessary.

To prepare for the telephone interview, have the following documents in front of you. A completed **Job Description**, **Task Schedule** and the contact information of the location you chose for conducting an interview.

Some helpful tips for a phone interview:

- Introduce yourself, not only as an IHSS consumer, but also as the potential employer.

- Briefly go over the job description and some of the tasks you need performed.
- **Remember, you are not trying to hire over the phone.**
- Some possible questions that can help you screen potential candidates over the phone could be the following:
  - Tell me about your current or last job.
  - Are you available to work the following days and times?
  - Would you have any problems doing anything on the job description?
  - Have you ever performed these tasks?
  - Where else have you worked?
  - Are you willing to comply with a no smoking rule?
  - Are you allergic to smoke?
  - Are you allergic to pets?
  - Give the applicant your contact information, in case of cancellation.
  - Give the providers that you are interested in an address and clear directions to the interview location.

Some helpful tips for the face-to-face interview could include the following:

- Try to meet in a public place.
- Bring a trusted friend or companion for a second opinion, if you wish.

- Create a comfortable and professional environment.
- Ask some of the same questions you asked during the phone interview and look for consistency.
- Explain the job description, work schedule, payment method, and specific tasks.
- Ask if there are any tasks that they will not do.
- Clarify your terms for dismissal like drinking on the job, arriving late, or not showing up for work without advance notice.
- Trust your instincts.

Some helpful tips for reference checks could include the following:

- Some registries may check references; however it is always a good idea to do your own reference check. When verifying employment references be sure to ask about the tasks that were performed, length of employment and reason for termination.
- Ask the provider if they would be willing to undergo a Criminal Background Investigation (CBI). Any IHSS consumer who wishes that their current provider complete a CBI can do so by requesting this service at the PASC Homecare Registry. When calling, make sure that you mention that the provider has not been registered with the PASC. The provider must give consent and attend an orientation. This service will be provided free of charge, if funds are available.