

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES

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GENERAL INFORMATION PERSONAL CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM Amended 12-2009

General Program Information

Personal care assistance services (PCA) provide help with “activities of daily living (ADL)” such as bathing, toileting dressing and grooming as well as assistance with “instrumental activities of daily living (IADL)” such as shopping and meal preparation. These services are typically provided in a recipient’s home by health care paraprofessionals (personal care assistants) and enable functionally disabled Alaskans of all ages, and frail elderly Alaskans, to live in their own home or community, instead of being placed in a more costly and restrictive long-term care institution.

The Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) administers PCA services through the Medicaid program. To be eligible for PCA services an individual must meet financial eligibility criteria and, through a “functional assessment,” be found to need assistance with either one ADL or one IADL.

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) manages the Personal Care Assistant (PCA) Program that now serves approximately 3000 Alaskans in 125 communities statewide. Services are provided through two different PCA agency models:

- **Agency-Based PCA Program (ABPCA)** – this model serves recipients through an agency that oversees, manages and supervises their care. This model has been operational for over 10 years
- **Consumer-Directed PCA Program (CDPCA)** – this model requires the recipient to manage their own care, select, hire, fire and supervise their own PCA, with the CD agency providing administrative support. This model has been operational since October 1, 2001

Access to both ABPCA and CDPCA services are available statewide. These services are described in state regulations, Title 7. Part 3. Chapter 43. Article 19. Section 7 AAC 43.750-795.

Agency-Based PCA (ABPCA)

- The ABPCA agency is responsible for managing and overseeing all the care for the consumer, which includes hiring, scheduling and dispatching PCAs;
- The ABPCA agency provides administrative support to the recipient and the PCA, including payroll, Medicaid billing, ensuring that PCAs have met training requirements and background check requirements;
- PCAs working in this program must successfully complete the approved PCA training program, have current CPR/FA and pass the criminal history background check;
- RN supervision of the PCA service plan is provided by the ABPCA agency.

How to get ABPCA services:

The process for obtaining ABPCA services is as follows:

1. Contact the ABPCA agency of your choice from the list of agencies available from the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services;
2. The ABPCA agency will complete the required intake forms with you and submit them to SDS;
3. An SDS will assessor will come to you home to complete a functional assessment;
4. if through the functional assessment the applicant is determined eligible for PCA services, SDS staff and assessor will develop a PCA "Service Plan." The service plan is then provided to the chosen provider agency.

If you would like to become a PCA in the ABPCA program:

If you would like to work as a PCA in the ABPCA program, please contact the ABPCA agencies to ask about opportunities. To qualify to work in this program you must complete state-approved PCA training, have a current CPR/FA card and pass the criminal history background check. A list of approved training programs and ABPCA agencies is attached.

Consumer-Directed PCA (CDPCA)

- The recipient is responsible for managing their own care, which includes recruiting, hiring, firing, scheduling their PCA and defining training requirements for their PCA;
- The recipient is responsible for indicating an emergency backup care provider who could be contacted to provide care if their regularly scheduled PCA is unable;
- If the recipient is not capable of managing their own care, they must formally choose a personal representative who is involved in their day-to-day care to manage for them;
- PCAs working in this program must pass the criminal history background check;
- The CDPCA agency provides administrative support to the recipient and the PCA, this includes payroll and Medicaid billing support for the PCA and training for the recipient or personal representative in managing the care;

- The recipient may hire a family member (excluding parents of a minor child, spouse, legal guardian, or sole Power of Attorney or a friend) to work as their PCA;
- the recipient may decide what training, if any, they will require for their PCA; there is no RN supervision provided by the CDPCA agency.

How to get CDPCA services:

The process for obtaining CDPCA services is as follows:

1. Contact the CDPCA agency of your choice from the list of agencies available from the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services;
2. the CDPCA agency will complete the required intake forms with you and submit them to SDS;
3. An SDS will assessor will come to you home to complete a functional assessment;
4. If through the functional assessment the applicant is determined eligible for PCA services, SDS staff and assessor will develop a PCA "Service Plan." The service plan is then provided to the chosen provider agency.
5. The CDPCA agency will advise you on how to begin to get a PCA hired and/or scheduled and services in place.

How to become a PCA in the CDPCA program:

If you would like to work as a PCA in the CDPCA program, please contact the CDPCA agencies to find out about opportunities. If you have a consumer who wants you to work for them, then you and the consumer must contact a CDPCA agency. A list of CDPCA agencies is attached.

If you need further information about the PCA program, please contact:

State of Alaska
Division of Senior and Disabilities Service
[Personal Care Assistance Services](#)
550 W. 8th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: (907) 269-3666 or 1-800-478-9996, Fax (907) 269-8164
Email: pcamailbox@health.state.ak.us

AGENCY-BASED AND CONSUMER-DIRECTED PCA COMPARISON CHART

	Agency-Based - ABPCA	Consumer-Directed - CDPCA
Employer	PCAs are employed by the ABPCA agency, they are also scheduled, dispatched and supervised by the ABPCA agency	The consumer and the CDPCA agency jointly employ PCAs. The consumer manages all care and the CDPCA agency acts as a fiscal agent
Referral for Services	Physician, care coordinator, family or consumer makes referrals	Consumer refer themselves
Assessment & Service Plan	PCAT Assessment must be done at least annually by a Division designee and they develop the PCA Service Plan with the DSDS staff - plan must be signed off by DSDS staff	A Division designee does the PCAT Assessment and develops the PCA Service Plan with the DSDS staff - plan must be signed off by DSDS staff
Treatment Plan Supervision	ABPCA must have a supervising RN who oversees the implementation of the PCA Service Plan; periodic visits by supervising RN at least every 6 months or whenever a change in need occurs and notifies DSDS of any request for change of services.	The CDPCA staff and the consumer review the PCA Service Plan at least annually or whenever a change in need occurs and notifies DSDS of any request for change of services. There is no RN supervision in this program
PCA Training & Qualifications	PCA must be LPN, RN, nursing home aide, CNA, or have taken PCA training or basic home health care skills training within last 5 years; other requirements include MMR immunization, TB test, criminal background check, current certification in CPR & FA	PCA is trained by the consumer to perform the specific tasks required by that consumer; any other requirements are defined by the consumer; consumer has the choice to require training or health tests; a criminal background check is required
Allowed PCA Tasks	Assistance to help an eligible individual perform activities of daily living (ADLs), such as bathing, dressing and grooming, toileting, eating; and in conjunction with ADLs, help with instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs),	Assistance to help an eligible individual perform activities of daily living (ADLs), such as bathing, dressing and grooming, toileting, eating; and in conjunction with ADLs, help with instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs),

	such as shopping, meal preparation and light housekeeping. The allowable PCA services are described further in state regulations, 7 AAC 43.750-795.	such as shopping, meal preparation and light housekeeping. Health maintenance activities are allowed as needed by the consumer. The allowable PCA services are described further in state regulations, 7 AAC 43.750-795.
Quality Assurance	Agency must have a quality assurance plan and ongoing monitoring of service quality. Biannual compliance reviews by the DSDS.	Agency must have a quality assurance plan and ongoing monitoring of service quality. Biannual compliance reviews by the DSDS.
Reimbursement Rate	\$22.28 per hour of PCA service base rate	\$22.28 per hour of PCA service base rate