



# Hiring In Home Care

## A Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center Quick Guide

1-800-540-4442 <http://www.usc.edu/lacrc>



<b>Do I need help?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does your loved one need help with activities of daily living?</li> <li>2. Are chores and routine errands not being completed?</li> <li>3. Do you need to be away from the home to take care of business needs?</li> </ol>
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<b>Consider your situation</b>	<b>List your problems so you know what kind of help you need</b>
	What type of help does my loved one need to live as independently as possible?
	How much money do I have available to pay for outside resources?
	Will my insurance cover any of these services?
	What days and times do I need help?
	What types of help are my friends and family members willing to provide?

<b>Hiring Help on Your Own</b>	<b>Responsibilities as an employer</b>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowing exactly what services you need.</li> <li>▪ Scheduling.</li> <li>▪ Managing performance and discipline of the care provider.</li> <li>▪ With-holding taxes and social security.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Filing proper reports and paying employee taxes.</li> <li>▪ Considering worker's compensation needs.</li> <li>▪ Monitoring the care provider for wrong doings or injuries to the impaired person.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Finding a care provider</b>		
	<b>Step 1: Contact candidates</b>	Candidates could be friends, neighbors, or family members. Ask other caregivers for referrals.	
	OR		
<b>Place an ad</b>	<b>Sample Ad</b> "Home Helper needed for chores. Must have drivers license and car. Non-smoker with time available in mid morning to mid afternoon weekdays. Call 555-4321, early morning is best."		
<b>Step 2: Screen candidates</b>	Ask questions so you get an idea of the worker's experience. Tell them about basic duties, schedule and other specifics (e.g., language, non-smoker, or driving). You don't have to interview everyone.		



<b>Hiring Help on Your Own</b>	<p><b>Step 3: Interview</b></p> <p><i>These are sample questions; tailor them to your needs.</i></p> <p><i>Add your own questions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where have you worked before?</li> <li>▪ Do you have <b>experience working with an elderly or disabled person</b>?</li> <li>▪ Do you know about _____ (illness or condition)?</li> <li>▪ Do you have any <b>health or physical problems</b>, which might hinder you on the job? (lifting, bending, ability to drive, push a wheelchair, etc.)</li> <li>▪ What other <b>obligations affect your schedule</b>?</li> <li>▪ Do you have your <b>own car and car insurance</b>?</li> <li>▪ How do you feel about <b>cooking</b> and eating food that someone else wants?</li> <li>▪ How do <b>you handle someone who is upset</b>, angry or fearful?</li> <li>▪ If appropriate: Do you have experience being around <b>someone with memory problems</b>? How do you handle someone who is confused?</li> <li>▪ What made you choose this kind of work?</li> <li>▪ Is there anything that makes you uncomfortable or angry?</li> <li>▪ How do you feel about <b>smoking, drinking or using drugs</b>?</li> <li>▪ Is there anything in the job description that you would not do?</li> <li>▪ When could you begin work? How long can you commit to the schedule?</li> <li>▪ <b>Do you have any questions</b> about the job duties, schedule, or salary?</li> <li>▪ Is there anything else you would like to add?</li> <li>▪ Please give me <b>two work-related references</b> and one personal reference.</li> <li>▪ Make sure I have your phone number and the best time to reach you.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Step 4: Evaluate interview</b></p> <p><i>Listen to your gut.</i></p>	<p><b>While the interview is fresh in your mind, note your impressions and concerns.</b></p> <p>Did the person arrive on time? Did I have a good feeling about the person?</p> <p>Did we agree on the job duties and schedule?</p> <p>Did the person provide references?</p> <p>Was there anything about the person that made me uncomfortable?</p>	
	<p><b>Step 5: Check references</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How long have you known the applicant?</li> <li>▪ What was their job / responsibilities?</li> <li>▪ What is your impression of them?</li> <li>▪ Are they reliable? Punctual?</li> <li>▪ Did they show initiative?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do they listen well?</li> <li>▪ Would you recommend them?</li> <li>▪ Are they trustworthy?</li> <li>▪ Do they show common sense?</li> <li>▪ Were there any problems?</li> <li>▪ Were you aware of any problems with drugs or alcohol?</li> </ul>

<b>Resources</b>	<b>Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center</b> <b>1-800-540-4442</b>	<b>Area Agency on Aging</b> <b>1-800-510-2020</b>
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<b>Hiring Help on Your Own</b>	<b>Step 6:</b> <b>Sign on the dotted line.</b>  <i>Get it in writing before you start!</i>	<b>Employer</b> _____ <b>Employee</b> _____ <b>Date of Hire</b> _____ <b>Salary</b> _____ (per hour, week, month) <b>Benefits</b> _____ <b>Terms of Payment</b> _____ (e.g., weekly, monthly) <b>Hours</b> __ to __ on _____ days [changes in schedule or hours to be negotiable] Employee's <b>Social Security #</b> _____ Employee <b>Duties</b> (fill in): Non-Acceptable Behavior/ <b>Reason for Termination</b> (fill in): <b>Signed:</b> Employer Name _____ Date _____ Employee Name _____ Date _____
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<b>Hiring Through an Agency</b>	<b>Responsibilities of the agency may include:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Finding care providers to meet your needs.</li> <li>▪ Training and supervising the care provider.</li> <li>▪ Scheduling.</li> <li>▪ Screening care provider for criminal backgrounds and license checks.</li> <li>▪ Reporting and filing all employer taxes.</li> <li>▪ Carrying professional liability insurance.</li> <li>▪ Providing worker's compensation for employee's injuries suffered on the job.</li> <li>▪ Bonding (insuring) the care provider that comes into your home.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Working with an agency</b>	
	<b>Step 1:</b> <b>Look for an agency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Yellow pages under "home health"</li> <li>▪ Hospital discharge planner or social worker</li> <li>▪ Caregiver resource center or other assistance programs</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center</b> <b>1-800-540-4442</b></p>
	<b>Step 2:</b> <b>Choose an agency</b>	<b>Consider:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Your loved one's needs</li> <li>▪ Fees and services</li> <li>▪ Screening of agency employees (e.g. background checks, drug testing)</li> <li>▪ Insurance and bonding of employees</li> <li>▪ Worker's compensation insurance</li> <li>▪ References</li> <li>▪ How does agency representative check on their care providers?</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3:</b> <b>Sign Contract</b>	<b>Continue to communicate with the agency</b>  <i>Get it in writing before they start!</i>	

<b>Deciding: Agency or on your own?</b>	<b>Hiring through an agency</b>	
	<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responsible for the care provider's benefits, etc.</li> <li>▪ Supervises the provider.</li> <li>▪ Agency will handle dismissal.</li> <li>▪ Assumes full liability for all care.</li> <li>▪ Easier to find help on short notice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May be less flexibility in the type of tasks worker is permitted to do.</li> <li>▪ You may not be able to choose the worker type, but not the individual.</li> <li>▪ May be more expensive.</li> </ul>
	<b>Hiring on your own</b>	
	<b>PROS</b>	<b>CONS</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Choice and control.</li> <li>▪ No restrictions for duties.</li> <li>▪ Cost is typically lower than an agency.</li> <li>▪ Flexibility in scheduling.</li> <li>▪ May defer some costs by offering room and board (see "Live-in helpers" below).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training, skill and fees for independent providers vary greatly.</li> <li>▪ Your work and time to locate and interview applicants.</li> <li>▪ No guarantee of a nursing credential or clinical training.</li> <li>▪ Background checks are up to you.</li> <li>▪ No back-up if provider can't work.</li> <li>▪ Liability for care is not covered.</li> <li>▪ Employer responsibilities (e.g., paperwork for social security, taxes, benefits).</li> </ul>

<b>Live-in helpers</b>	<b>Live-in helpers may be a good way to save money, but there are important considerations.</b>	
	<b>Set boundaries</b>	<b>Establish living arrangements</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limit the work hours.</li> <li>▪ Provide a reasonable schedule with time off.</li> <li>▪ Establish how extra hours worked or "on call" will be compensated.</li> <li>▪ Respect and ensure their privacy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Common areas where they can relax.</li> <li>▪ Establish a meal schedule.</li> <li>▪ Refrigerator space.</li> <li>▪ Share your food or buys their own?</li> <li>▪ Phone / Internet policy.</li> <li>▪ Visitor policy (you should allow guests).</li> </ul>
	<b>Living quarters need:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bed</li> <li>▪ Dresser</li> <li>▪ Nightstand and lamp</li> <li>▪ Chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Closet (empty)</li> <li>▪ Bathroom access</li> <li>▪ To be clean and presentable when offered</li> <li>▪ An intercom may be useful</li> </ul>
<i>Note: The person you hire will not become a family member or a guest. They are an employee.</i>		

Questions?	<b>Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center:</b> Central LA (213) 740-1376 Southeast LA (562) 469-6255	<b><a href="http://www.usc.edu/lacrc">http://www.usc.edu/lacrc</a></b> San Gabriel Valley (626) 814-3334 Antelope & Santa Clarita Valley (661) 945-4852
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