

**County of Riverside
Department of Public Social Services
In-Home Supportive Services
Public Authority**



**Home Care Provider
Handbook**

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IHSS Public Authority's Mission Statement

As an enhancement to the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, the IHSS Public Authority strives to assist seniors and persons with disabilities to remain safely in their homes.

Being a Successful Home Care Provider

Most elderly and disabled individuals prefer to stay independent for as long as possible. They want to stay in control of their lives and live in their homes or apartments among familiar surroundings and friends.

Sometimes, in order to achieve these goals, additional help in the home is needed. This guide will give you information to help you feel more comfortable about helping someone remain in their home. This guide also contains detailed information about questions to ask IHSS consumers regarding hiring, supervising and dismissal of home care providers.

WHAT IS THE IHSS PUBLIC AUTHORITY?

The County of Riverside In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority is a part of Adult Protective Services and was established to assist IHSS consumers, who are elderly and/or disabled, find home care providers so they can continued to live independently in their owns homes. The Public Authority operates a registry that:

- > Recruits home care providers throughout Riverside County .
- > Screens applicants through background checks and drug & alcohol screenings.
- > Maintains a computer database of IHSS consumers and home care providers.
- > Uses the computer to match IHSS consumer needs with the stated skills and availability of home care providers.
- > Sends IHSS consumers a list of names of potential home care providers from which they can hire.
- > Provides free training to IHSS consumers and home care providers.

The Registry provides support services to IHSS consumers as needed. These services may include:

- > Assisting the IHSS consumer and home care provider understand employer/employee roles, rights and responsibilities.
- > Assisting the IHSS consumer with the hiring of home care providers.
- > Calling home care providers and setting up interviews.
- > Assisting with conflict resolution between an IHSS consumer and home care provider.

HOME CARE PROVIDER TRAINING

Your IHSS consumer will train you to provide the tasks in his or her home, but some of you will want additional training in safety, CPR/First Aid, infection control in the home and other topics such as providing personal care, working with difficult people, how to reduce stress, and many other topics. The IHSS Public Authority provides free training sessions throughout the county.

Contact the Public Authority for more information at 1-888-470-4477 or visit our website at www.rivcoihsspa.org .



Preparing for the Interview

TELEPHONE SCREENING

IHSS consumers will take the time to interview applicants, but first they will want to screen them by phone. If you, as the applicant, sound reliable and the IHSS consumer gets a good feeling from the telephone conversation, the IHSS consumer may set up an interview time. If the phone screening does not go well, the IHSS consumer may not make an appointment for an interview.

It is very important that you respect and maintain confidentiality. Do not ask the IHSS consumer for any personal information such as name, address, or phone number.

Remember to:

- > Be friendly.
- > Give a brief description of your skills and experience.
- > State the number of hours you are available to work.
- > Ask if the IHSS consumer needs you to accompany him/her to medical appointments. If so, how often and what is the distance?
- > Offer to provide the IHSS consumer with a list of references at the time of the interview.
- > Even if you do not get the offer of a personal interview, thank them for calling.



INTERVIEWING IN PERSON

Arrive at your interview on time. The IHSS consumer may wish to have a family member, trusted friend or a neighbor present during the interview. This may help them feel safer and more comfortable. The family member or friend may think of additional questions to ask and assist the IHSS consumer in the interview. You may feel more relaxed about interviewing if you practice what you are going to say with someone else before you actually have an interview.

Be prepared to show an identification card with a picture such as a Driver's License, a State of California issued identification card, or your IHSS Public Authority registry identification.

Become acquainted with the IHSS consumer by letting them tell you about themselves. This also shows the consumer that you have an interest in them as a person.

Review with the IHSS consumer their "Notice of Action" which they received from their IHSS Social Worker. This will tell you how many hours and which tasks they are authorized to receive. If you do any unauthorized work, you will not be paid for it.

Preparing for the Interview

POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of work have you done?
2. What kind training, if any, have you had?
3. What type of work do you enjoy?
4. What type of work do you NOT enjoy?
5. What are your interests?
6. Why are you in this line of work?
7. Do you mind being around someone who smokes or drinks?
8. Are you allergic to cats, dogs or other animals?
9. Would you be willing to take me to my doctor's appointments?
10. Do you have a Driver's License and car insurance?
11. Would you be willing to work together with me on some tasks?
12. Will you cook according to my needs and plan menus with me?
13. Is there anything on the "Notice of Action" that you cannot or would not do?
14. Do you have any problem understanding written or oral directions?
15. What days and hours are you available?



AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Thank the IHSS consumer for inviting you to interview.

Ask the IHSS consumer when they will be making a decision.

THE IHSS NOTICE OF ACTION

All tasks are authorized by the IHSS Social Worker as shown on the IHSS consumer's "Notice of Action." As an IHSS home care provider, you may perform a variety of household management tasks including meal planning, shopping, food preparation, house cleaning, personal care, transportation to medical appointments, paramedical services, and/or laundry.

REMEMBER

You are hired by the IHSS consumer; he/she is your employer.

SPECIAL NEEDS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The IHSS consumer may have special needs. The following is a list of questions that provides the IHSS consumer information about your experience working with a consumer who has special needs. If you have experience or special knowledge in these areas, let the IHSS consumer know.

1. Have you had any experience in caring for a person with severe memory loss?
2. How would you handle a person who wanders?
3. How would you deal with a person who refuses to eat?
4. How would you handle aggressive or abusive behavior?
5. What kind of special training have you had?
6. How would you handle a medical emergency?
7. Have you ever been certified to give First Aid and/or CPR?
8. Can you perform wound care? Would you be willing to learn how?
9. Can you measure and document changes in behavior?
10. Do you know how to operate a lift to transfer someone?
11. Can you change a bed with someone in it?

Your Responsibilities as a Home Care Provider

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

As the IHSS home care provider, you have the responsibility and obligation to:

- > Be on time to work every time (no excuses)
- > Provide quality service by using the authorized hours in an efficient, effective manner.
- > Know what services are authorized by reviewing the IHSS consumer "Notice of Action" with the IHSS consumer and provide authorized services only. Remember you are only to do work needed by the IHSS consumer, not others in the household.
- > Help the IHSS consumer maintain or increase self-sufficiency.
- > Promptly report any changes in the IHSS consumer's health, abilities, environment, or need for services to the IHSS Social Worker and the IHSS Public Authority.
- > Fill out timecards, work schedules and other forms as required.
- > Maintain strict confidentiality about the IHSS consumer you work for.
- > Report suspected abuse or neglect.
- > When you decide to leave the assignment, give at least a two week notice.

PERSONAL CARE

Personal care is care of the person's body, and may include assisting the IHSS consumer with:

- > Bathing and dressing.
- > Grooming (shampoo, hair care, shaving and brushing teeth).
- > Transferring from wheel chair to bed, changing positions, walking and moving from place to place.
- > Using the toilet.
- > Bowel and Bladder care.
- > Skin care.
- > Assistance to eat.
- > Range of motion and stretching.



PARAMEDICAL SERVICES

If the IHSS consumer's doctor has ordered paramedical services, such as help to fill insulin syringes or other basic medical procedures, a licensed health care professional or your IHSS consumer must train you before you do these tasks.

Your Responsibilities as a Home Care Provider

LIGHT HOUSEKEEPING

Although duties may vary among IHSS consumers, a general description of light housekeeping includes doing the following tasks for the IHSS consumer only:

- > Vacuuming, dusting, and sweeping.
- > Damp mopping kitchen and bath areas.
- > Washing areas.
- > Cleaning counter tops in kitchen and bath.
- > Cleaning stove and refrigerator.
- > Making beds and changing linens.
- > General tidying up.

Light housekeeping does NOT include: moving heavy furniture or refrigerators, turning mattresses, cleaning floors on hands and knees, cleaning windows, scrubbing walls, cupboards, baseboards or ceilings, washing window coverings such as drapes or blinds, shampooing or scrubbing rugs or carpets. These can be done only if heavy cleaning is authorized, usually only once when the IHSS consumer enters the IHSS program.



The IHSS consumer must provide all cleaning supplies.

Pet care is NOT an authorized activity.

LAUNDRY

Hand laundry is limited to two or three personal items of the IHSS consumer's that cannot be machine washed. Machine laundry can be done in the IHSS consumer's home or at a laundromat (limited to the IHSS consumer's items only). The IHSS consumer must provide money and supplies (soap, etc.) to operate the machines.

LIGHT IRONING

Light ironing is limited to two or three articles of the IHSS consumer's clothing only (no sheets, pillowcases, tablecloths, or curtains) if necessary.

Driving Your IHSS Consumer

TAKING IHSS CONSUMERS TO MEDICAL VISITS

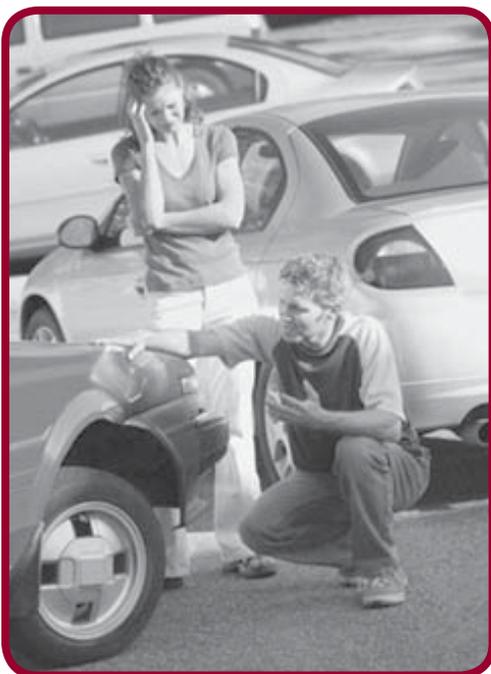
Transportation services may be authorized for you to take the IHSS consumer to medical appointments. The purpose is to make sure the person receives the transportation to and from the doctor's office.

Accompanying the IHSS consumer to medical appointments is permitted when the IHSS consumer requires assistance at the appointment and cannot go alone.

- > Assisting an IHSS consumer in and out of a vehicle or an office building is allowed when the IHSS consumer is unable to perform these activities independently.
- > IHSS does not pay for automobile insurance, but you **MUST** have insurance to transport the IHSS consumer.
- > **Remember to turn OFF your cell phone when transporting an IHSS consumer, for your safety and the safety of the IHSS consumer.**

IHSS DOES NOT PAY FOR:

- > Gasoline, mileage, parking or public transportation costs.
- > Routine gardening or other outdoor work.
- > Pet care (feeding, cleaning up after, or exercising)
- > Moving furniture, boxes, etc.
- > Washing windows.
- > Household chores for visitors or family members who are not IHSS consumers.
- > Paying bills or reading mail
- > Care when the IHSS consumer is in the hospital or nursing home.



INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

Workers Compensation covers home care providers for all injuries they may incur while doing services specifically authorized by an IHSS Social Worker.

If the home care provider is injured while performing a task NOT authorized, the IHSS consumer could be held responsible if the IHSS consumer asked you to perform the task.

If you are injured or hurt while performing an authorized task, you MUST report it immediately to the IHSS Social Worker and the IHSS Public Authority (1-888-470-4477).

IHSS Payroll and Benefits

TIMECARDS

There are two pay periods each month: 1st to 15th and 16th - the last day of the month.

Fill out time sheets with blue or black ink. Write clearly.

Never use white-out. Cross out mistakes to make corrections.

Both the IHSS consumer and home care provider should initial the change.

Use the conversion chart to claim minutes worked.

Time sheets must be signed and dated by both the home care provider and IHSS consumer, unless the IHSS consumer has an authorized representative.

The IHSS consumer signature on the time sheet confirms that the home care provider has completed the hours written on the time sheet. An IHSS consumer should not sign an inaccurate, incomplete or blank time sheet.

Home care providers should not work or claim more than the authorized hours. They will not be paid for working extra hours. Claiming more hours is considered fraud.



PAYROLL INFORMATION

It is YOUR responsibility to turn in your timecard. The majority of late paychecks are a result of a home care provider submitting the timecard late. Incomplete or illegible timecards also cause delays. Paychecks should arrive within ten (10) working days after the timecard is received by the County Fiscal Office. If you are receiving health benefits, late time cards may jeopardize your eligibility.

- > Avoid mailing your time sheets early. Time sheets received early will be returned.
- > Any private arrangement made between the IHSS consumer and the provider to do work other than that which is authorized by the IHSS Social Worker is strictly between the IHSS consumer and the home care provider and will NOT be paid for by IHSS.
- > The IHSS consumer is responsible for paying the Share of Cost amount directly to the home care provider, if one is shown on the timecard, during the first pay period of the month.
- > The County is NOT responsible for the Share of Cost (SOC). The IHSS consumer who refuses to pay the SOC can lose his/her IHSS eligibility and services.

TAXES

Social Security contributions will be withheld unless the home care provider is caring for their own spouse, or is a minor child working for their parent. Income taxes will not be withheld unless you request it. If you want taxes withheld, fill out the W-4 form given to you during the registration at the IHSS district office. Home care providers may be eligible for Earned Income Tax Credit. Be sure to speak to a tax professional about this.

IHSS Payroll and Benefits

BENEFITS

Depending on the amount of time worked, you may be eligible for State Disability and/or Unemployment Benefits if you are laid off. Home care providers who work more than 80 hours per month for three consecutive months **may** be eligible for health benefits.

REGULAR WORK HOURS AND TIME OFF

IHSS does not pay for vacation or sick time off. If the home care provider does not work the hours authorized, the IHSS consumer may give that time to another home care provider. Requests for time off/sick time must be directly coordinated with the IHSS consumer.

- > Days NOT worked should be crossed out or have a 0 on the time sheet.
- > Always call the IHSS consumer when arriving late or unable to work.
- > If planned time off is needed, call the IHSS-PA Registry Specialist or Community Program Specialist and give the IHSS consumer plenty of advance notice so there will be time to arrange for a replacement through the Public Authority Registry.
- > Never send a substitute to work for the IHSS consumer.
- > Submit time sheets promptly and accurately at the end of each pay period.

BE PROFESSIONAL ON THE JOB

Always remember that this is a job. Just because the work is in someone's home or working for a relative or friend does not mean it can be treated as any less of a job.

- > Do not bring friends or children to the workplace.
- > Do not tell the IHSS consumer your personal problems. Keep discussions of personal life to a minimum.



- > Do not eat the IHSS Consumer's food or accept gifts or loans from the IHSS consumer.
- > Do not borrow money from the IHSS consumer even if they offer it.
- > Never discuss controversial subjects such as religion or politics.
- > Never ask the IHSS consumer to contribute to, join or buy anything.
- > TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE OR PUT IT ON VIBRATE while you are working for the IHSS consumer.

Maintaining Good Work Practices

CONFIDENTIALITY

Never tell anyone the name, address, medical or other personal information about the IHSS consumer. This information is considered confidential by State Law. Never discuss the IHSS consumer's personal or private affairs with anyone other than the IHSS Social Worker or the IHSS Public Authority Staff.



UNPAID TIME

Home care providers will not be paid for any time spent performing tasks while an IHSS consumer is hospitalized or on vacation (unless the home care provider accompanies the IHSS consumer in order to assist them and all trips must be in the United States, which MUST be approved by the IHSS Social Worker)

WORKING ALONE IN THE IHSS CONSUMER'S HOME

Never work in the IHSS consumer's home when the IHSS consumer is temporarily absent, such as at a doctor's appointment. Work while the IHSS consumer is present to reduce complaints of theft or damage to the IHSS consumer's personal property and to reduce questions about the completion of tasks.

GOOD COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to being a good home care provider. When the IHSS consumer explains the task, ask questions to make sure there is an understanding of exactly what is needed to be done and how the IHSS consumer wants it done. Ask the IHSS consumer to write down what they want done and how they want it done. Try to do the tasks as the IHSS consumer asks. Remember, this is their home and their body, and they know what will work. Listen to the IHSS consumer's wishes and do everything you can to meet them within reason and the Notice of Action. Respect their knowledge. If you are unclear about something, ask the IHSS consumer. Please do not argue with the IHSS consumer. If problems arise in communicating with the IHSS consumer, the IHSS Public Authority Community Program Specialist can help with mediation. Call the Registry Specialist or the Community Program Specialist at 1-888-470-4477.

SUPERVISION

Supervision includes accountability, good communication and record keeping. It is important to encourage the IHSS consumer to do as much as they can.

Ask the IHSS consumer to post the main list of their needs and the job description on the refrigerator. If they want certain things done in a specific way, it is important to write them down. This makes communication and supervision easier. Remember, there are many ways to do things. This can be a cooperative effort. Here are some guidelines to follow:

ACCEPTING CORRECTION

- >Discuss problems as they arise, don't bottle them up. Discuss them fairly and calmly.
- >When being offered correction, first listen to the IHSS consumer, then ask the IHSS consumer how they want the task done.
- >Blaming the IHSS consumer or making them feel ashamed is not helpful to the situation. If you find it difficult to be corrected by your IHSS consumer, ask for help from the Public Authority Program Specialists. They can assist in mediating problems.

Maintaining Good Work Practices

HANDLING THE IHSS CONSUMER'S MONEY

When you handle money, personal checks, and other types of checks, credit cards, or Medi-Cal cards that belong to the IHSS consumer:

- > Obtain a note with permission from the IHSS consumer for anything that is handled and/or taken out of their home.
- > Before leaving the IHSS consumer's house, count the money in front of the IHSS consumer and verify the amount taken.
- > Make a note of the amounts on a piece of paper.
- > Upon returning, verify the amount spent and the amount of change, and have the IHSS consumer initial the piece of paper. This is for the protection of the home care provider and the IHSS consumer.
- > Provide receipts for all expenditures.

BREAKAGE OF AN IHSS CONSUMER'S PROPERTY

- > Be careful in the IHSS consumer's home to avoid damaging ANY of the IHSS consumer's possessions.
- > If something is damaged, tell the IHSS consumer immediately to avoid being liable to pay or replace it.
- > Remember, the IHSS consumer may terminate you if items are routinely damaged.



BEING RESPONSIBLE

- > IHSS consumers should not leave valuables lying around. They should keep their jewelry, cash, checkbook, and credit cards put away safely and securely. If valuables are left out, ask the IHSS consumer to put them away. Do not move any valuables without their permission.
- > Ask for a receipt every time when shopping for the IHSS consumer. Be sure to give all receipts to the IHSS consumer.
- > Do not add your name to the IHSS consumer's savings, checking, charge account, Social Security Income (SSI) or any other documents.
- > Try not to get involved with the IHSS consumer's private life.
- > Do not lend the IHSS consumer money, household furnishings or clothing.
- > If the IHSS Consumer is abusive, for example: hitting, screaming, endangering health and safety, contact their IHSS Social Worker and the Public Authority Community Program Specialist. Call the police (911) or Adult Protective Services at 1-800-491-7123. Always report problems to the IHSS Community Program Specialist 1-888-470-4477.

Maintaining Good Work Practices

BEING DISMISSED BY THE IHSS CONSUMER

There are many reasons for letting someone go. It may be that the IHSS consumer just does not feel comfortable, the home care provider is bossy, is not doing what they agreed upon, is arriving late for work or is missing days without notice. Remember, the IHSS consumer is the employer and has the right to terminate the home care provider. Other reasons for dismissal might include abuse of drugs or alcohol, excessive use of the telephone or items missing from their home.



OTHER REASONS LEADING TO DISMISSAL MAY INCLUDE:

- > Theft or financial abuse.
- > The IHSS consumer may ask for an explanation if they suspect theft or misuse of bank accounts.
- > If they really believe something of value is missing, they may call the police.

IF YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE

- > Make sure you give the IHSS consumer ample notice so they can find a new home care provider.
- > Call the Public Authority and the IHSS District office to let them know you are no longer working for the IHSS consumer.



INSPIRATIONAL

Meet IHSS consumer Vonda Grycko and her home care provider, Florence Henry. They were matched by the Public Authority back in 2007. When most non-relative matches generally last around one year, these ladies have managed to make this professional relationship last five years! By any standard, this is an amazing accomplishment.

According to Ms. Grycko, it was quite a learning experience, but through good communication they learned to work together and make this match work!

ONE LAST WORD

Being a good IHSS home care provider takes learning and experience. If you need help in handling any of these issues, you can call the IHSS Public Authority at 1-888-470-4477. We can assist you in working out problems between you and your IHSS consumer.