

Tips to Help You Hire a Private Caregiver

Make a Schedule:

- ☐ Decide what tasks need to be completed, how often, and what time of day the tasks must be completed.
- ☐ When considering the schedule, it is important to balance the care recipient's health and safety needs, while also considering their right to privacy and independence.
- ☐ Staff schedules are generally based on time sensitive tasks such as meals and medication administration.
- ☐ Write out an ideal schedule, but be flexible when you can be.
- ☐ Be creative and try new options. An example: Rather than adding a mid-day shift, some people may look into lunch meal delivery, or having a care provider prepare a lunch meal in the morning that a person may be able to grab from a plate in the refrigerator later.

Write a Job Description:

- ☐ A job description should be specific to the care recipient's specific needs. Some tasks only need to be done once a week or monthly, but be sure to include them.
- ☐ Include the care recipient in this process to make sure their preferences are taken into consideration. For instance, if the care recipient prefers to have a caregiver that will cook healthy meals with them, you can include that in the job description and also in the advertisement.
- ☐ Having a well written job description will help you hire the right person for the job.
- ☐ Make sure to update annually or as needs change.

How do I look for a private caregiver?

- ☐ Ask family, friends, and neighbors
- ☐ Wisconsin Respite Care Registry: <https://respitecarewi.org/registry/>
- ☐ Check with other community resources such as a church, Senior Center, SAIL, or word of mouth
- ☐ Advertise on Care.com: <https://www.care.com/>
- ☐ Check with Universities and Colleges: UW Student Jobs, Edgewood, Madison College, Herzing, etc.
- ☐ Use caution with Craigslist or social media such as Facebook or Nextdoor
- ☐ Consider an Employment Agency with Staffing Service
 - Employment Agencies recruit and may have a pool of individuals.
 - You are still the employer and will do the hiring, firing, paying the caregivers, withholding taxes, problem solving, etc. You are responsible for liability for injury and proof of insurance and verification that caregiver can work legally in U.S.
 - They will charge a fee for their services

Interviewing and Screening Potential Caregivers:

- ☐ Initial interview/screening can be done by phone.
- ☐ Ask for a resume and references.
- ☐ After the initial screening, meet the person at a neutral location for an interview.
- ☐ If appropriate, the care receiver should be present for the interview.

Example Interview Questions:

- ☐ Tell me a little about your background and education.
- ☐ Where have you worked before? What were your duties?
- ☐ What is your experience helping someone with tasks such as bathing, dressing, or other personal care?
- ☐ What was one of your proudest moments on the job? What was one of your most frustrating moments and how did you handle it?
- ☐ Is there anything in the job description that you are uncomfortable doing?
- ☐ Do you have any training, continuing education or certifications?
- ☐ What is your availability? Days? Hours? Can you adjust your schedule if necessary?
- ☐ Do you have any questions?

Further resources for interview questions:

- ☐ <http://www.seniorsresourceguide.com/articles/art00980.html>
- ☐ <https://www.elderlawanswers.com/12-interview-questions-to-ask-an-in-home-aide-9730>
- ☐ <https://qtindependence.com/what-not-to-do-when-interviewing-caregivers/>

Background Check:

1. Ask for references, at least two from former employers. Call their references. Here are some example questions: <https://www.care.com/c/stories/3150/questions-to-ask-when-calling-references/>
2. Ask to see a photo identification card such as a valid driver's license or passport. Other valid forms of identification (ID) include: Department of Motor Vehicles ID card, Green card, Military ID card, Immigration card, Alien Registration card, or a valid out of state Driver's License.
3. If the person claims to be licensed, check with the licensing body, e.g. the Board of Nursing. <https://licensesearch.wi.gov/>
4. Conduct a background check using the Wisconsin Online Record System <https://recordcheck.doj.wi.gov/>
5. If the prospective employee will be transporting the client, check with the DMV to confirm their driving record <https://trust.dot.state.wi.us/ecdl/home.do>

Paying your caregiver:

1. All U.S. employees must complete an Employment Eligibility Verification form I-9. This form verifies that the person is legally entitled to work in the United States. A W-9 form is also completed by the employee to set up payroll. You will also have to apply for an employer ID number. <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>
2. Negotiate a wage with the care provider. As of 2019, the federal minimum wage is set at \$7.25 / hour. On www.payingforseniorcare.org it reports that the average hourly rate for a home care worker is \$23.50 in Wisconsin. Hourly or shift payment? Holiday, vacation, or sick pay? Cash or check? Weekly, semi-monthly, monthly? For more information on Wisconsin Labor Standards go to: <https://www.dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/laborstandards/>
3. You will need to pay employee related payroll taxes and insurance. Review this guide for detailed information about legally paying a caregiver. <https://www.payingforseniorcare.com/homecare/hiring-independent-caregivers>
4. You may want to consider hiring an attorney, accountant or fiscal agent/payroll agency to assist you with handling payroll.

Other things to Consider: Check your homeowner's insurance to make sure it covers household employees.

Complete an Employment Agreement:

- ☐ You can use the job description to include specific tasks the care provider will need complete.
- ☐ Here is a link to an example agreement: <https://www.caregiver.org/personal-care-agreements>

Provide Training:

- ☐ Plan on spending time with new staff with the care recipient to ensure they are comfortable with each other.
- ☐ Make sure you show the person how to complete tasks and ensure they know how to complete personal care tasks safely before they work on their own.
- ☐ Have instructions in writing.
- ☐ Wisconsin Respite Care Registry provides free online training for caregivers

Supervision & Evaluation: Here are two links to help you come up with a plan:

- ☐ <https://www.caregiver.org/working-successfully-home-care-services>
- ☐ <https://www.agingcare.com/articles/how-to-know-if-your-caregiver-is-doing-a-good-job-154382.htm>

Make an Emergency & Back-up Plan

- ☐ Emergency Plan information: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/older-adult-emergency/index.html>
- ☐ Back-up Plan information: <https://sixtyandme.com/expecting-the-unexpected-as-a-caregiver-how-to-create-a-backup-plan/>

Other Guides to Help You Hire a Private Caregiver:

- ☐ A Family's Guide to Hiring the Right Caregiver <https://www.seniorliving.org/research/hiring-caregivers/>
- ☐ Hiring In Home Help <https://www.caregiver.org/hiring-home-help>
- ☐ Caregiving Guide <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/caregiving/2018/02/prepare-to-care-guide-english-aarp.pdf?intcmp=AE-CAR-P2CGD-ENG>

Disclosure: Information was compiled from sources linked within document. Information provided is not comprehensive. The ADRC of Dane County cannot provide legal or tax advice. It is recommended to seek legal assistance when hiring a private caregiver.