



The Hiring Process

Getting the word out that you are looking for an individual provider is the first step. Finding and hiring the right person is more involved. There are five stages in the hiring process:

1. Screen applicants through a telephone interview.
2. Meet for face-to-face interviews with the strongest candidates.
3. Check references.
4. Select a new individual provider and communicate your decision to those you have interviewed.
5. Communicate your decision to your social worker to begin the individual provider enrollment process and, if you have hired someone from the Public Authority's Registry, let them know as well.

Preparing for the Interviews

Before talking with prospective candidates, it helps to write out a brief description of the job and the questions you wish to ask the candidates for your position. You can use the Notice of Action that you received from IHSS to summarize what you want the Individual Provider to do and how many hours a month you will need him/her to work. The Notice of Action describes the tasks that have been authorized for your care and the number of hours per month that IHSS will pay someone to provide those services. Remember that IHSS individual providers are only allowed to help you with duties authorized by your IHSS Social Worker. If you have any questions about what tasks are authorized, call your Social Worker before you hire someone.

Another important part of the job description is the days and times you want the individual provider to work. This is for you to decide. If you can be flexible about when the individual provider comes to work, you may have more options in

choosing a good individual provider. Finally, plan to tell the candidate in general terms where you live and indicate any special requirements you have for the person you hire. For example, indicate whether you want a non-smoker, someone who has their own car and is willing to drive you to appointments or someone who can lift a certain number of pounds.

Next, write out the questions you wish to ask candidates over the phone and other questions that you want to ask those you interview in person.

Here are some questions that you might consider asking during your telephone interview:

- Can you tell me something about yourself?
- Are you available to work the days and times I need you?
- Would you have any problem doing the tasks I need done?
- Do you have experience performing these tasks?
- Have you had any training in home and personal care? If so, please describe where you received this training and what it covered.
- Where else have you worked?
- Do you have reliable transportation for getting to work?
- Do you smoke?
- Do you use alcohol or drugs?
- Could you give me work and personal references that I could check? I will need names and phone numbers and, if this is a work reference, the dates of your employment and the type of work.

Ask the candidate to bring the following items to the in-person interview:

- A valid Driver's License or California picture Identification Card.
- His/her Social Security card or green card indicating that s/he has permission to work in the U.S.
- The names and phone numbers of at least three references. These should include previous employers or instructors who are familiar with his/her homecare skills.

- Proof of auto insurance if the individual provider will be driving his/her own car as part of the job.
- A Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) printout of his/her driving record if the individual provider will be driving you to appointments in either his/her car or yours. Printouts are available from their local DMV office.
- Applicable training certificates, if any.
- TB test results indicating that s/he does not have the disease.

If the candidates have a resume, it will be helpful if they can bring a copy to the interview. It is a good idea to interview at least two or three candidates. The process of comparing their strengths helps you decide what skills are most important to you. Another good reason to interview multiple candidates is that it is nice to have a back-up Individual Provider for times when your regular Individual Provider is ill or has other unavoidable commitments. The back-up Individual Provider may also serve as a second or subsequent Individual Provider if the person you hire moves on to another job.

Consumers with a large number of authorized hours should consider hiring multiple individual providers. Having multiple individual providers gives you a built-in back-up individual provider and makes your job easier when you have to replace one of them. Having multiple individual providers does place more responsibility on the consumer to coordinate their schedules so that, together, they do not exceed the total number of authorized hours. If they do, the person whose timesheet is processed second will not be paid for some of the hours they worked. The consumer should ensure that each individual provider works only the number of hours s/he has been assigned.

Questions for the Face-to-Face Interview

In the face-to-face interview, it is a good idea to review the tasks and work schedule that you described over the phone. Make sure that the candidate is comfortable with the tasks that have been authorized and that you can agree on a work schedule. You can use the Sample Job Agreement that appears at the

end of the next chapter as a guide for your discussion. This will give you an opportunity to discuss whether you will be paying a share of the cost of your care directly to the individual provider and, if the individual provider will be driving you to appointments in his/her car, who will pay for gas. Topics to cover during the interview include:

1. IDENTIFICATION – Ask to see his/her identification. Examples include a valid California Driver's License or Identification Card with a picture and Social Security Card.
2. JOB DESCRIPTION – Review the job agreement or job description. Point out any special requirements.
3. TASK LIMITATIONS – Ask if there are any tasks s/he will not perform.
4. REFERENCES – Ask for references, both personal and job-related. Make sure you get names and current phone numbers so you can call the references later.
5. EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE – Ask for information on education, training, and experience in homecare services.
6. DRIVER'S LICENSE – If you need the individual provider to drive for you, make sure the individual provider shows you a valid Driver's License and ask to see proof of insurance if the individual provider will be using his/her own car. Clarify with the individual provider if you will be paying for gas and at what rate.
7. TRIAL PERIOD – Tell the individual provider that for the first few weeks you will be showing him/her how you want things done and seeing if s/he learns the tasks well.
8. REASONS FOR FIRING – Explain what actions might require you to fire the individual provider. Reasons may include using your belongings without your permission, consistently arriving late, or being unable to meet your needs.

Reference Checking

Checking references is essential. It will give you valuable information about the applicant. When calling references ask questions such as the following:

1. Did (*name of applicant*) work with you in (*dates of employment*)?
2. What kind of work did s/he do for you?

3. Why did (*name of applicant*) stop working for you?
4. Would you hire him/her again?
5. What were his/her strengths?
6. What could have been improved about his/her job performance?

Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9 Form) Responsibility

As the employer, you are responsible for completion and retention of the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (commonly known as the I-9 Form) for each individual you hire for employment in the United States. This includes citizens and non-citizens. On the form, you must verify the employment eligibility and identity documents presented by the employee and record the document information on the I-9 Form.

Where Do You File the I-9 Form?

You do not file the I-9 Form with U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or USCIS. You must keep the I-9 Form either for three years after the date of hire or for one year after employment is terminated, whichever is later. The form must be available for inspection by authorized U.S. Government officials (e.g., Department of Homeland Security, Department of Labor, and Office of Special Counsel).

To Obtain an I-9 Form or get More Information

To obtain an I-9 Form, get a list of acceptable documents that establish identify and/or employment eligibility, or any other information regarding the I-9 Form, please visit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-9> or contact their office at 1-800-375-5283 (TTY 1-800-767-1833).

Selecting an Individual Provider

After you have interviewed a sufficient number of individuals, you will want to choose the individual provider who will best help you with your needs. With a friend or family member, compare the strengths and weaknesses of each

candidate and consider which of the candidates' qualities are most important to you. Trust your judgment. When you have made your decision, call the individual provider you would like to hire and offer him/her the job. Remind the individual provider of the pay level and number of hours, discuss a start date with the individual provider and obtain his/her commitment to begin work on the agreed upon day.

If you interviewed other individuals, it is important to call them and inform them that you have made your decision and have hired someone else. If you liked another person, however, you may want to ask if you can keep his/her number available in case you need a back-up Individual Provider.

If you interviewed candidates from the Public Authority's Registry, call the Registry to let them know you have hired someone. They can assist you with the paperwork and help you calculate the number of pro-rated hours that your new individual provider can work during his/her first month on the job.