

General Program Information

Personal care assistance services (PCA) provides help with “activities of daily living (ADL)” such as bathing, toileting, dressing and grooming, “instrumental activities of daily living (IADL)” such as shopping and meal preparation, and “other covered services” such as medication reminders, O2 equipment maintenance, and dressing/bandaging/and wound care . These services are provided in a recipient’s home by health care direct support workers personal care assistants (PCA’s) and enable functionally disabled Alaskans of all ages to live in their own home or community.

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 physical assistance with at least one ADL or IADL.

Statewide, access to both ABPCA and CDPCA services is made available through administrative agencies (PCA agencies) serving as enrolled providers. In addition, PCA’s are individually enrolled to serve as PCAs working for an enrolled PCA agency. Services available are described in State regulations, Title 7. Part 3. Chapter 125. Article 1. Section 7 AAC 125.010-199.

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, SDS manages the PCA Program that now serves approximately 5300 Alaskans 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 the recipients care.

- The ABPCA agency is responsible for managing and overseeing all the care for the consumer, which includes hiring, scheduling, developing a backup plan to provide PCA services if the regularly scheduled PCA is unavailable, and developing a contingency plan to ensure the health and welfare if PCA services are unable to be provided, 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 an approved PCA training program, have current CPR/FA, be enrolled with Alaska Medicaid as a renderer and pass the criminal history background check.
- RN supervision of the PCA 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 SDS.
2. The ABPCA agency will complete the required application forms with you and submit them to SDS.
3. An SDS assessor will come to your home to complete a functional assessment.
4. If through the functional assessment and information from your medical provider, you are determined eligible for PCA services, SDS will develop a PCA “Service Level Authorization.” You, your legal representative if applicable, and your chosen provider agency will be notified of the results of your functional assessment.
5. Once notified of the approval of services, the ABPCA agency will work to get your PCA hired and/or scheduled and services in place.

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 an ABPCA agency to learn about opportunities. To qualify to work in this program you must complete state-approved PCA training, have a current CPR/FA card and pass a criminal history background check. Lists of approved training programs and ABPCA agencies are located on the SDS PCA website:

<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Documents/pca/pcatrainerlist.pdf>

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 Consumer Directed agency providing administrative support.

- The CDPCA recipient is responsible for managing their own care, which includes recruiting, hiring, firing, scheduling their PCA, specifying training requirements for their PCA and assuring that the specified training has been provided to the PCA.
 - The recipient is responsible for obtaining a completed Verification of Diagnosis form and any prescriptions, if needed, from their licensed medical provider.
 - The recipient is responsible for participating in the functional assessment, developing a backup plan about how PCA services are provided if the regularly scheduled PCA is unavailable, and developing a contingency plan to ensure the health and welfare if PCA Services are unable to be provided.
 - The recipient is responsible for notifying the provider agency within 15 days of any changes to:
 - § the place of residence or living arrangement
 - § personal contact information
 - § legal representative information
 - § your medical provider
 - § service need (such as the establishment of waiver chore or duplicative services through home health, etc.)
 - § (improvements or declines) to your mental, physical, or medical condition and
 - § age or marital status that would alter eligibility for PCA services.
 - The recipient must work with their chosen provider agency to submit yearly complete application documentation timely.
- If the recipient is not capable of managing their own care, they must present information about a legal representative who is involved in their day-to-day care to manage and evaluate the PCA service as it occurs in the home for them.
- PCAs working in this program must pass the criminal history background check, have current CPR/FA, and be enrolled with Alaska Medicaid as a renderer.
- The CDPCA agency provides administrative support to the recipient and the PCA. This includes payroll and Medicaid billing support for the PCA and recipient or legal representative training in managing the PCA Service.
- Under the CDPCA model, the recipient may the following to work as their PCA:
 - a non related person (such as a friend or neighbor)
 - or a family member, exceptions apply (parents of minor children, spouses, most legal guardians, sole power of attorney or a joint/dual power of attorney who are also a paid caregiver are restricted from serving as a paid PCA
- The recipient decides what training they will require for their PCA.
- There is no RN supervision of the PCA services 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 SDS.
2. The CDPCA agency will complete the required application forms with you and submit them to SDS.
3. An SDS assessor will come to your home to complete a functional assessment.
4. If through the functional assessment and information from your medical provider, you are determined eligible for PCA services, SDS will develop a PCA "Service Level Authorization." You, your legal representative if applicable, and your chosen provider agency will be notified of the results of your functional assessment.
5. The CDPCA agency will advise you on how to begin the process to get your 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 a CDPCA agency to learn about opportunities. If you know of consumer who wants you to work for them, then the consumer must contact a CDPCA agency. A list of CDPCA agencies can be accessed at

http://dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Documents/grantservices/PDFs/AB_and_CD_PCA_Agencies.pdf

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@alaska.gov

Website: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Pages/pca/default.aspx>